THE MYTHICAL DETECTIVE LOKI

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KINOSHITA SAKURA

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HEYYY! JON, WHERE'RE YOU GOINNNG?
WOOF
WOOF !!
FSHHHHHHHHHH.....
!?
WOOF
C'MON. THAT LADY'S GONE NI-NIGHT AND YOU'RE GONNA WAKE HER UP!
WURF
WOOF
WOOF
WURF
HOW COME THIS LADY'S HEAD IS GONE?
MAMA?

NIGHT 1
ENTER THE MYTHICAL DETECTIVE LOKI!

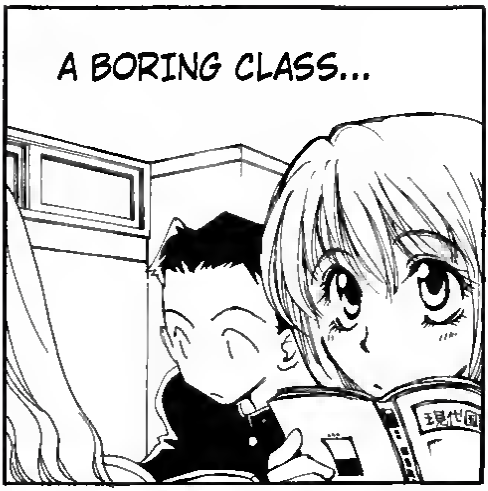
THE
mythical detective Loki
R. YAMINO

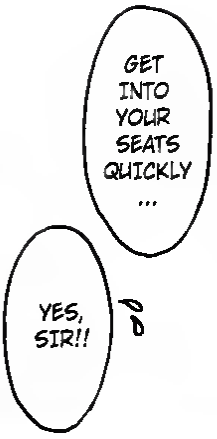
OH MAN. IT'S SO SCARY, RIGHT? I CAN'T EVEN WALK AROUND OUTSIDE BY MYSELF ANYMORE!
IT IS SAID THAT IN THIS WORLD THERE IS A RACE OF CREATURES WHO WILL CUT OFF THE HEADS OF ANY WHO DARE TO TEMPT THEM.
MUMBLE
MUTTER
IT'S A GRIM REAPER, RIGHT?
YEAH, IT SO IS!
HEY HEY HEY HEY, WHATCHA TALKIN' ABOUT...?
TELL ME TOO! I WANNA KNOW!
THIS PERSON'S NAME IS...
MAYURA DAIDOUJI (16)

GRIM REAPER!?
THEY'RE SAYIN' IT'S ALL DONE BY THIS "DOUBLE-WIELDING GRIM REAPER" NOW.
SO LATELY, THERE'S BEEN ALL THESE INCIDENTS AROUND HERE WHERE GIRLS GET KILLED, RIGHT?
I'M JEALOUS, SO JEALOUS... MY FACE IS THIS UGLY SKULL, YOU SEE...
SO GRIM REAPERS REALLY REALLY WANT...
...YOUNG AND PRETTY FACES.
THAT BEAUTIFUL FACE, FRAMED BY THAT SHINING HAIR...
AND HE CARRIES THESE TWO GIANT SCYTHES IN EITHER HAND, AND...

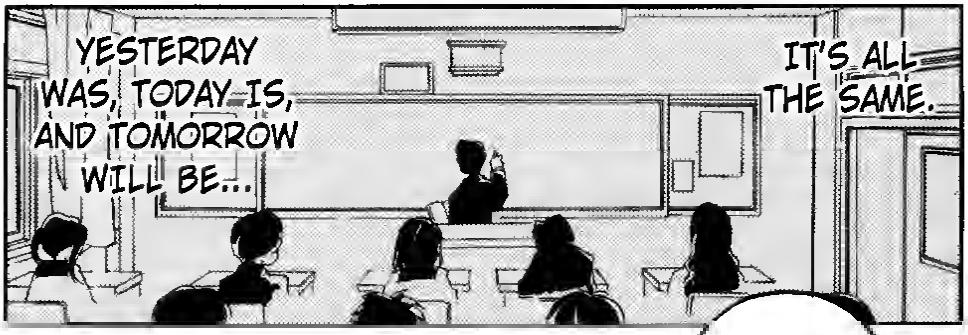
SLAAAA
...THEN IT CUTS OFF YOUR HEAD.
AAAASH
WAT?
JUST LIKE JACK THE RIPPER!
THAT'S AWESOME! SO ROMAN-TIC!
GLEAM
.....
PFF, SHUT UP!
WHAT DO YOU THINK? IT'S TOTES SCARY, RIGHT? PLUS, I HEARD THAT THE TARGETS ARE PRETTY GIRLS, JUST LIKE US.
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT IT, KAHO? NOT INTERESTED AT ALL?
I'M SURE THAT THE INCIDENT IS A REAL THING, BUT...
SHE'S A HUGE DORK FOR MYSTERIES!
OH NO, NO! DON'T TALK ABOUT STUFF LIKE THIS AROUND MAYURA, SHE GETS WAYYYY TOO WORKED UP!
GOSH, CALM DOWN, MAYURA!
HOW DO YOU FIND IT!? LET'S ALL GO OUT AND TRY TO CAPTURE IT!!

AW, MAN... YOU AND MY DAD KEEP SAYING THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS GHOSTS AND SPIRITS, BUT DANG, THAT'S SO BORIIING.
SIGH
I GUESS YOUR DAD MIGHT, MAYURA. IF HE MET UP WITH IT, HE COULD JUST EXORCISE IT, AFTER ALL.
AHAHA, NO WAY! EVEN THOUGH HE'S A SHINTO PRIEST, HE DOESN'T EVEN BELIEVE IN GHOSTS OR ANYTHING!
WHAT KIND OF A PERSON SAYS THEY WANT TO MEET A GRIM REAPER??
HEY YOU TWO, CLASS IS ABOUT TO START!
!
HMMM.. WELL, IT'S PRETTY OLD AND RUSTY AND EVERYTHING...
EARLIER WHEN IT WAS RAINING REALLY HARD, IT WAS SHOWING 6:00 EVEN THOUGH IT WAS MIDNIGHT. I WAS SURPRISED!
OH HEY THAT CLOCK TOWER WAS FIXED...
HUH?
WAS IT BROKEN?



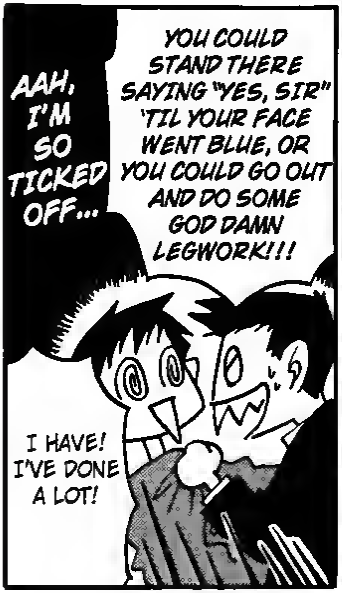


THIS SORT OF REALLY SILLY CONVER-SATION...

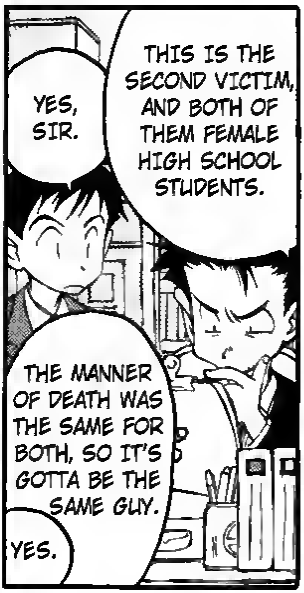


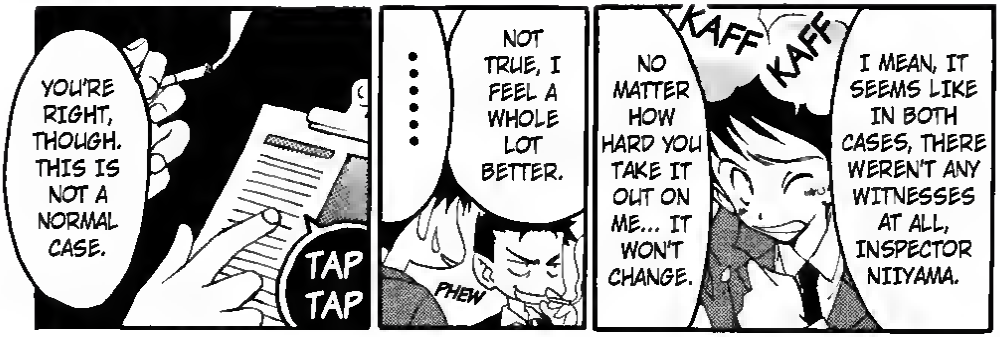
YOUR LEGWORK IS JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH, YOU COMPLETE MORONS!!
YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT NO WITNESSES HAVE COME FORWARD!?
INVESTIGATIONS

GRRRRRR
GRRRR
HOW IN THE WORLD DID YOU MESS THIS ONE UP...
GRRRR
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT CHIEF INSPECTOR, MASUMI NIIYAMA.


AAH, I'M SO TICKED OFF...
YOU COULD STAND THERE SAYING "YES, SIR" 'TIL YOUR FACE WENT BLUE, OR YOU COULD GO OUT AND DO SOME GOD DAMN LEGWORK!!!
I HAVE! I'VE DONE A LOT!

YES, SIR.
AND THESE YOUNG LADIES WERE DRAGGED OFF WITHOUT ANYONE HEARING EVEN ONE SCREAM? ISN'T THAT WEIRD!?
BAM BAM


YES, SIR.
THIS IS THE SECOND VICTIM, AND BOTH OF THEM FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS.
THE MANNER OF DEATH WAS THE SAME FOR BOTH, SO IT'S GOTTA BE THE SAME GUY.
YES.


YOU'RE RIGHT, THOUGH. THIS IS NOT A NORMAL CASE.
TAP TAP
NOT TRUE, I FEEL A WHOLE LOT BETTER.
PHEW
NO MATTER HOW HARD YOU TAKE IT OUT ON ME... IT WON'T CHANGE.
KAFF KAFF
I MEAN, IT SEEMS LIKE IN BOTH CASES, THERE WEREN'T ANY WITNESSES AT ALL, INSPECTOR NIIYAMA.

THE FIRST INCIDENT WAS REPORTED BY THE SANITATION OFFICE WHEN THEIR EMPLOYEES FOUND A GIRL'S BODY FROM THE NECK DOWN ABANDONED IN A PILE OF TRASH.
THE HEAD HASN'T BEEN RECOVERED YET.
THE SECOND INCIDENT WAS OF ANOTHER GIRL'S BODY FROM THE NECK DOWN BEING DISCOVERED BY A MOTHER AND CHILD WHILE WALKING THEIR DOG IN CENTRAL PARK. THE HEAD OF THAT BODY IS ALSO STILL MISSING.

WELL... IT'S QUITE HORRIBLE, BUT IN MY OPINION...
IT SEEMS LIKE THE KILLER JUST WANTS THE GIRLS' HEADS, SO HE DUMPS THE REST OF THE BODY...
WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE STATE OF THESE TWO BODIES?
HMM...

THEY'RE BOTH REALLY CUTE... WHAT A SHAME.
AND ALSO, WHAT'S THE COMMONALITY BETWEEN THE TWO GIRLS, WHY'D HE CHOOSE THEM?
HRMMM. IF WE ASSUME THAT'S WHAT HE'S AFTER... WHY? WHAT IS HE THINKING?
YEAH, TRUE, AND MOREOVER, THEIR FEATURES AND APPEARANCES ARE VERY SIMILAR.
WE CHECKED TO SEE IF THEY WERE FRIENDS OR ACQUAINTANCES, BUT NOTHING CAME OF IT.
WE HAVEN'T RELEASED ANY DETAILS DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE INCIDENTS...
ONE MAGAZINE HAS FOUND IT INTERESTING AND STRANGE ENOUGH TO WRITE ABOUT...
THEY CALL THE CULPRIT "THE DOUBLE-WIELDING GRIM REAPER"
WH... DOUBLE-WIELDING?
INSPECTOR NIIYAMA!

I'VE JUST GOTTEN A WEAPONS ANALYSIS FROM THE HEADLESS GIRLS CASE.
OH YEAH? I BEEN WAITING FOR THAT!
OK FIRST, HERE'S THE RE-PORT.
WOAH, THAT'S THICK!
OH?
WELL, BRIEFLY: IT SAYS THAT BOTH GIRLS WERE KILLED BY THE SAME TWO WEAPONS.
THEIR HEADS WERE CUT OFF FROM BOTH SIDES, IN A SCISSORS MOTION.
.....
"DOUBLE-WIELDING...
...GRIM REAPER." HUH...?
THE GRIM REAPER..
THIS IS THE KIND OF TIME WHEN A SUPER COOL DETECTIVE CORNERS THE CULPRIT OF THE CRIMES...
"I'VE FINALLY FOUND YOU, MR. GRIM REAPER," HE'LL SAY.
HEEE... AWESOME
LITTLE BIRD DETECTIVE AGENCY

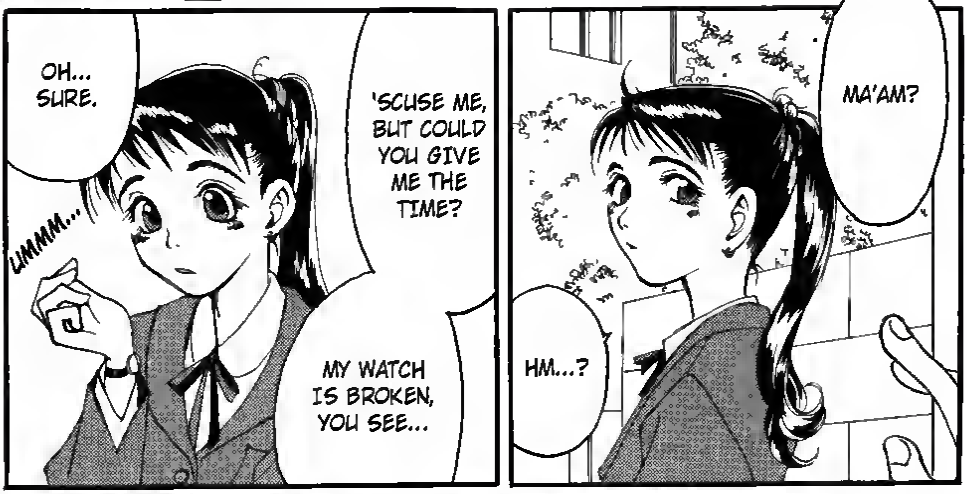
HUH? LITTLE BIRD DETECTIVE AGENCY!?
WAIT, WAS THERE ALWAYS A BIG OLD MANOR HOUSE HERE...?
THAT'S KIND OF INTEREST-ING...
SWISH
SWISH
OH MY GOD, THAT GUY IS JUST MY TYPE...! IS *HE* THE DETECTIVE!?
OH?
!!
UM.. E- EXCUSE ME.
THUD
THUD
I'M ON MY WAY HO-

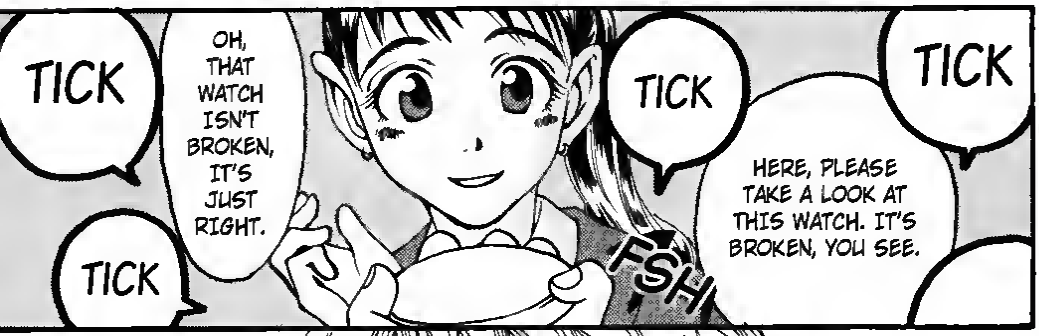
GASP
SLITHER
SSS
YOU'RE A CLIENT, RIGHT? YOU HAVE A CASE, RIGHT? COME ON IN, COME RIGHT ON IN!!
WHA!?
HUH!?
DASH
WAIT, WAIT, PLEASE, MR. DETECT-IVE!
OH, I'M NOT THE DETECT-IVE
I'LL GET YOU SOME NICE HOT TEA WHILE YOU TELL ALL ABOUT IT!
DRAG
DRAG
AUGH WHAT GROSS DECOR!!
LOKI-SAMA... WE HAVE A GUEST.
GULP
ALLOW ME TO INTRO-DUCE OUR AGENCY'S RESIDENT DETECTIVE...
AH, OF COURSE. MY APOLOGIES. MY NAME IS RYUUSUKE YAMINO.

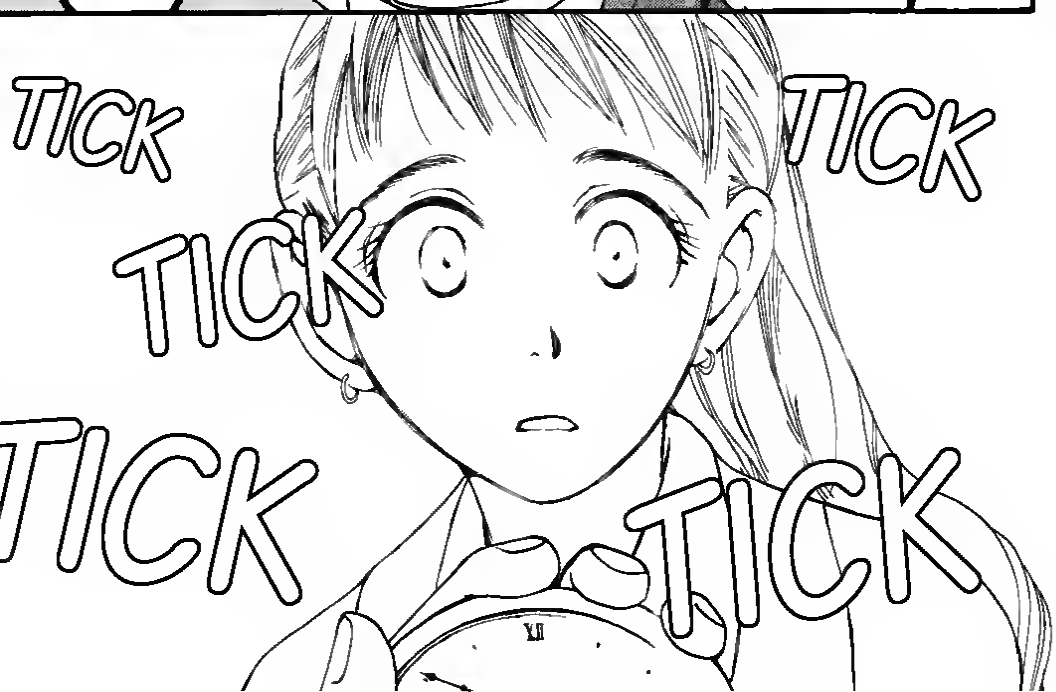
WELCOME TO MY DETECTIVE AGENCY,
LITTLE LOST LAMB.
DWA
HHHHH
WHAT!?
YOU'RE THE DETECTIVE!?
UH HUH....
AHAHA
I MAY BE CURRENTLY TRAPPED IN A CHILD'S FORM, BUT MY EXQUISITE PRESENCE IS SUCH THAT IT MATTERS NOT WHETHER I AM IN THE FORM OF AN ADULT OR A CHILD. MY TALENTS AND SKILLS REMAIN UNCHANGED!
AAH!
KAW!
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE THINKIN' "A KID CAN'T BE A DETECTIVE!"

AND WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
MAYURA DAIDOU-JI....
MAYURA, THEN. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE FROM ME?
.....
NO-THING, REALLY...
EH?
YAMINO-KUN, THIS PERSON IS NOT A CUSTOMER. TAKE HER HOME.
UMMMM, SORRY YOU MUST HAVE JUST MADE A BIT OF A MISTAKE...
SO WHAT WERE YOU DOING IN FRONT OF THIS PLACE?
WELL... YOU SEE... I KIND THINK THAT DETECTIVES AND STUFF ARE REALLY COOL, AND SO...
OH MAN, DID HE SEE ME OUT THERE...?
WELL, HE SOUNDS LIKE A REAL DETECTIVE NOW, DOESN'T HE...
IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, THAT CURIOSITY WILL LOSE YOU YOUR HEAD.
KEEP THAT IN MIND, MAYURA.
BUT OF COURSE THAT ALSO MEANS THAT THIS WEIRD LITTLE KID IS TALKING TO ME SUPER FAMILIARLY, USING JUST MY FIRST NAME AND ALL....

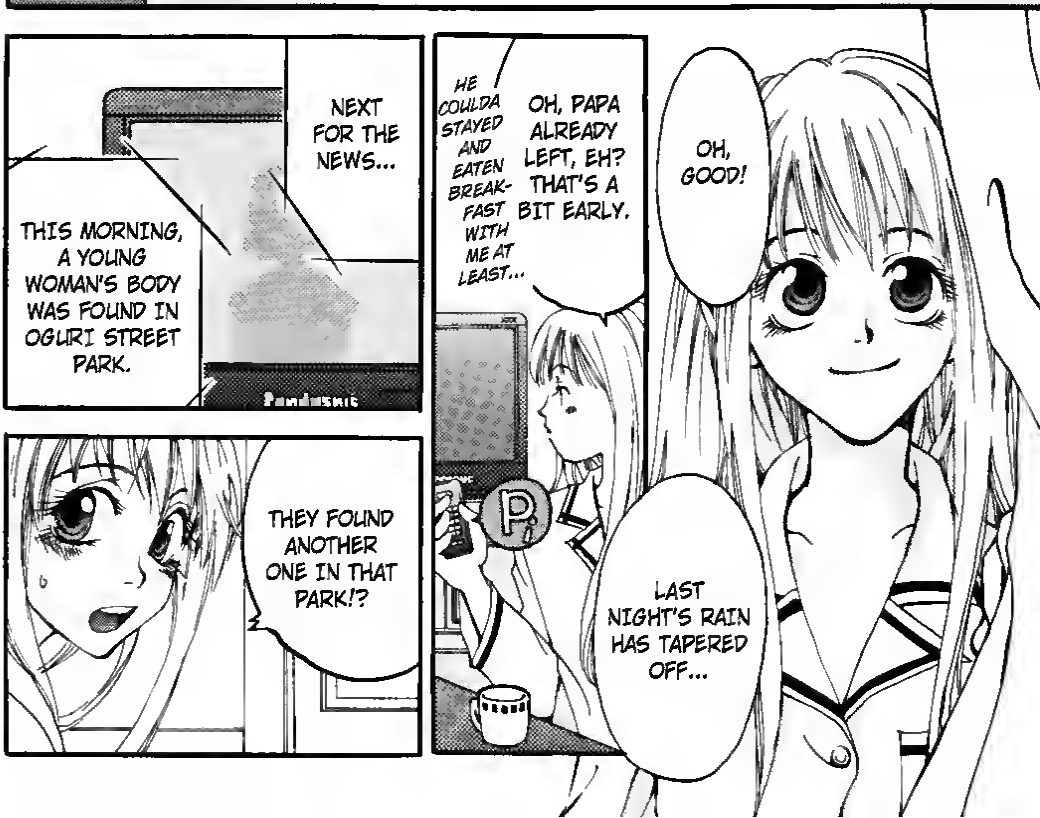
AWWWWW, IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S GONNA RAIN. AND I'VE GOT CRAM SCHOOL, TOO...!
OH, WELL THEN, YOU SHOULD BE OKAY!
THE REPORT SAID IT WON'T START UNTIL THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.
OKAY! SEE YOU TOMORROW!
BYE BYE!

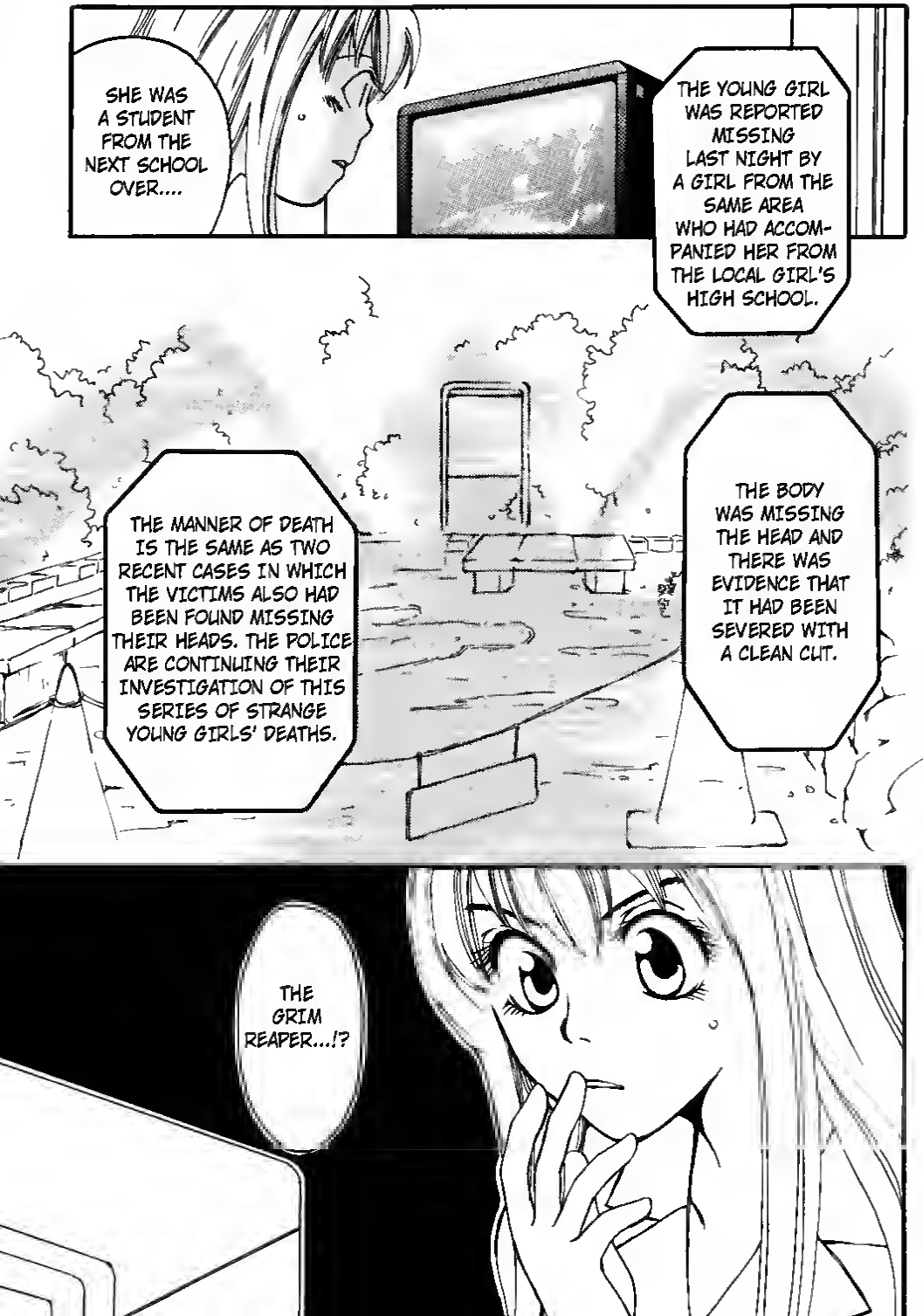

'SCUSE ME, BUT COULD YOU GIVE ME THE TIME?
OH... SURE.
UMMM...
MY WATCH IS BROKEN, YOU SEE...
MA'AM?
HM...?


TICK
OH, THAT WATCH ISN'T BROKEN, IT'S JUST RIGHT.
TICK
TICK
HERE, PLEASE TAKE A LOOK AT THIS WATCH. IT'S BROKEN, YOU SEE.
TICK
FSH

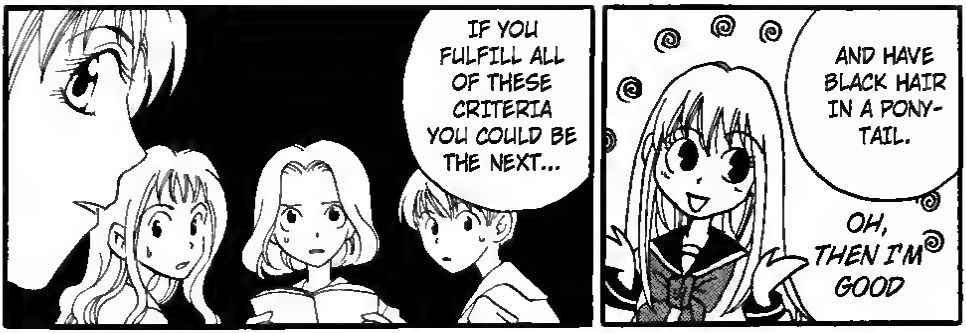

TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK
TICK

FSHHHHHH

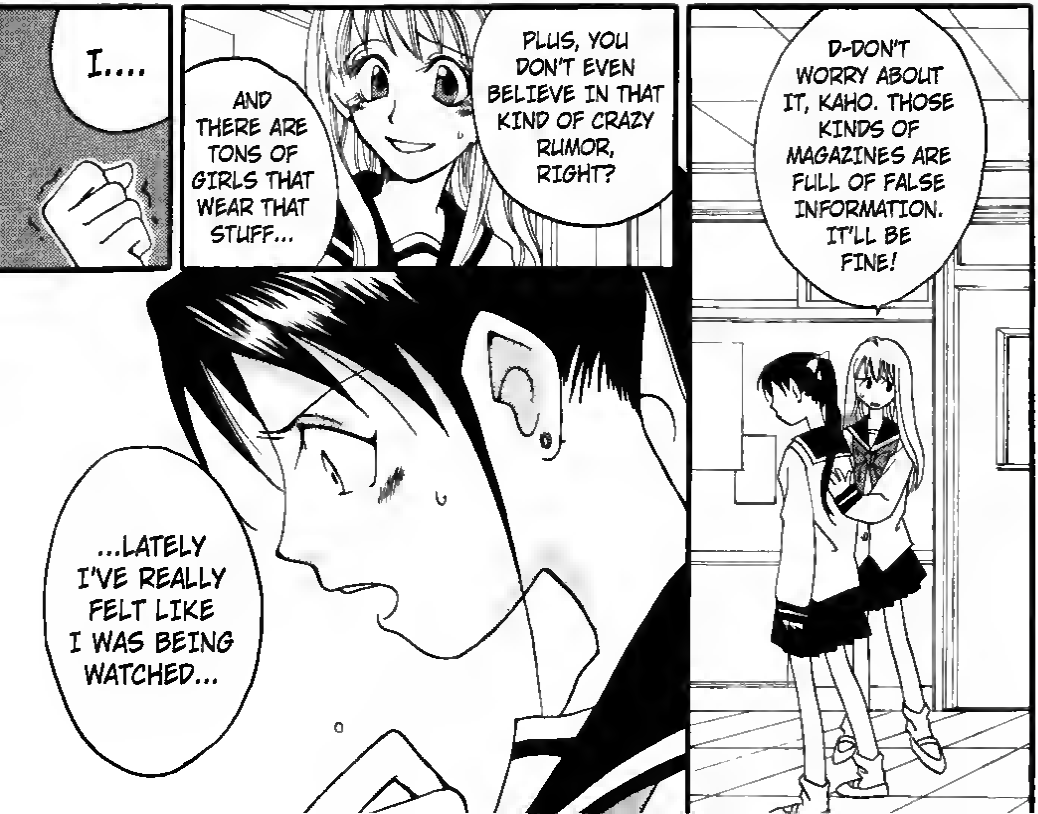

OH, GOOD!
LAST NIGHT'S RAIN HAS TAPERED OFF...
OH, PAPA ALREADY LEFT, EH? THAT'S A BIT EARLY.
HE COULDA STAYED AND EATEN BREAK-FAST WITH ME AT LEAST...
NEXT FOR THE NEWS...
THIS MORNING, A YOUNG WOMAN'S BODY WAS FOUND IN OGURI STREET PARK.
THEY FOUND ANOTHER ONE IN THAT PARK!?


SHE WAS A STUDENT FROM THE NEXT SCHOOL OVER....
THE YOUNG GIRL WAS REPORTED MISSING LAST NIGHT BY A GIRL FROM THE SAME AREA WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED HER FROM THE LOCAL GIRL'S HIGH SCHOOL.
THE MANNER OF DEATH IS THE SAME AS TWO RECENT CASES IN WHICH THE VICTIMS ALSO HAD BEEN FOUND MISSING THEIR HEADS. THE POLICE ARE CONTINUING THEIR INVESTIGATION OF THIS SERIES OF STRANGE YOUNG GIRLS' DEATHS.
THE BODY WAS MISSING THE HEAD AND THERE WAS EVIDENCE THAT IT HAD BEEN SEVERED WITH A CLEAN CUT.
THE GRIM REAPER...!?

THE GIRL THAT WAS KILLED WAS FROM THE NEXT SCHOOL OVER.
REALLY? CREEPYYY!
MURMUR
MURMUR
THE EARLIER ONES WERE GIRLS FROM NEAR HERE, TOO...
HE REALLY EXISTS! I KNEW IT!!
"THE DOUBLE-WEILDING GRIM REAPER!!"
HEY GUYS, CHECK OUT THIS MAGAZINE! IT'S GOT AN ARTICLE CALLED "THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE VICTIMS... SHOULD YOU BE AFRAID?"
OOH! WELL, READ IT! LET'S ALL DO AN EARLY CHECK!
OK. FIRST... YOU HAVE TO LIVE IN THIS AREA...
BE A FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT.
HAVE PIERCED EARS...
PHEW
PAPA WOULDN'T LET ME


IF YOU FULFILL ALL OF THESE CRITERIA YOU COULD BE THE NEXT...
AND HAVE BLACK HAIR IN A PONY-TAIL.
OH, THEN I'M GOOD

"LIKELY BRIDE OF THE...
...GRIM REAPER"


I....
AND THERE ARE TONS OF GIRLS THAT WEAR THAT STUFF...
PLUS, YOU DON'T EVEN BELIEVE IN THAT KIND OF CRAZY RUMOR, RIGHT?
D-DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, KAHO. THOSE KINDS OF MAGAZINES ARE FULL OF FALSE INFORMATION. IT'LL BE FINE!
...LATELY I'VE REALLY FELT LIKE I WAS BEING WATCHED...

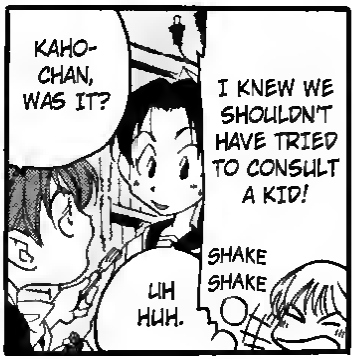
THE NEXT HEADLESS GIRL IS GOING TO BE ME, I CAN FEEL IT!
I KEPT FEELING THIS STRANGE GAZE ON ME WHILE I WAS WALKING HOME FROM SCHOOL.
BUT WHEN I TURNED AROUND, THERE WAS NO ONE THERE...
OH YEAH! I MET THIS DETECTIVE! LET'S GO CONSULT HIM!
THIS MUST BE THE MEANING OF THE PHRASE "ANY PORT IN A STORM..."
WHAT DO I DO?
I WAS GONNA SAY "JUST PUT YOUR HAIR DOWN," BUT... IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS, THAT'S NO GOOD...
UMMM...
I MEAN, IF SHE'S ALREADY MARKED BY THE KILLER, THEN SOMETHING LIKE THAT DOESN'T REALLY GET TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM...

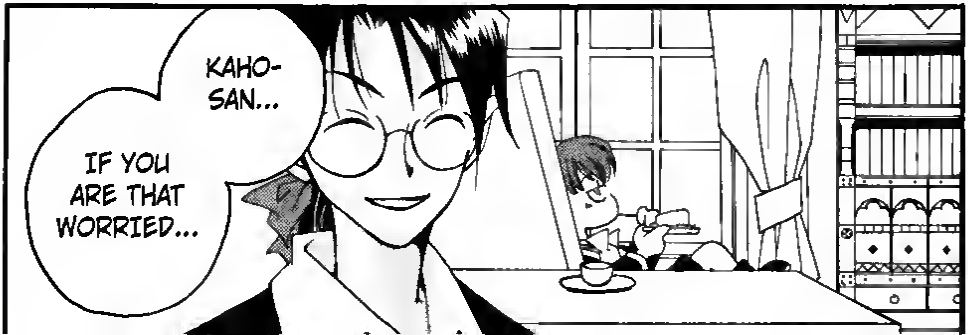
HRMM...
YOU SURE ARE IN A TIGHT SPOT.

YEAH I GUESS HE IS...
UMMMM, IS THIS KID THE DETECTIVE?

WHAT BASIS DO YOU HAVE FOR THIS CONFIDENCE?
BUT SINCE YOU HAVE COME TO ME FOR HELP, YOU CAN REST EASY NOW!

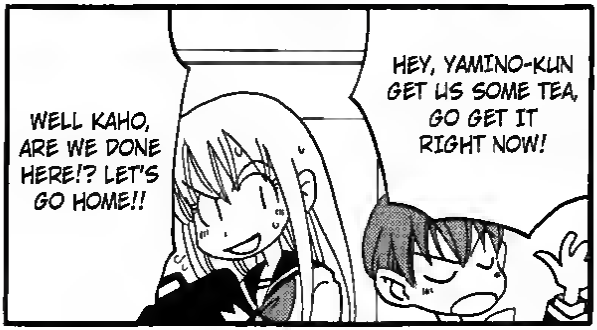
AH
OH HELLO YAMINO-SAN!
WHAT KIND OF A LAME ANSWER IS THAT!?
HI THERE

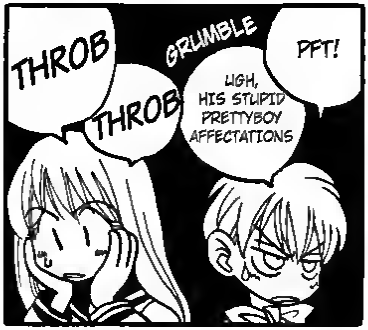

KAHO-CHAN, WAS IT?
I KNEW WE SHOULDN'T HAVE TRIED TO CONSULT A KID!
UH HUH.
SHAKE SHAKE

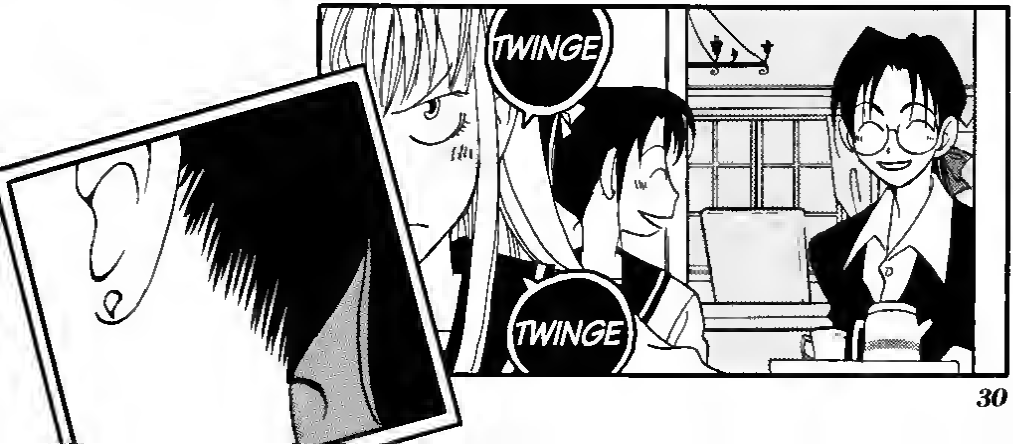

KAHO-SAN...
IF YOU ARE THAT WORRIED...

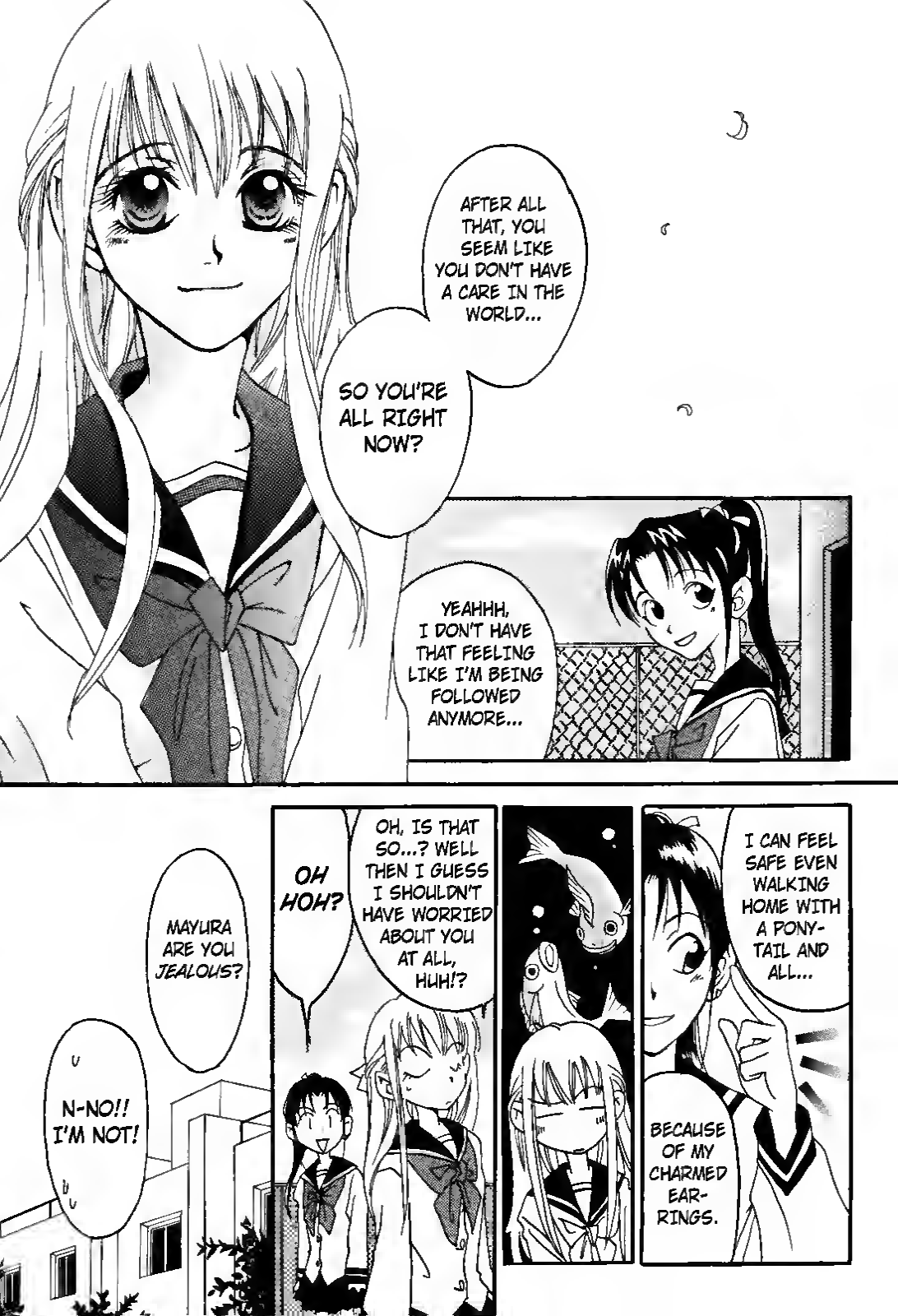
THEY ARE CHARMS, YOU SEE.
!!!
?

PLEASE KEEP THESE EARRINGS ON YOUR PERSON AT ALL TIMES, AND DO NOT TAKE THEM OFF.
HERE, BOTH EARS.
!

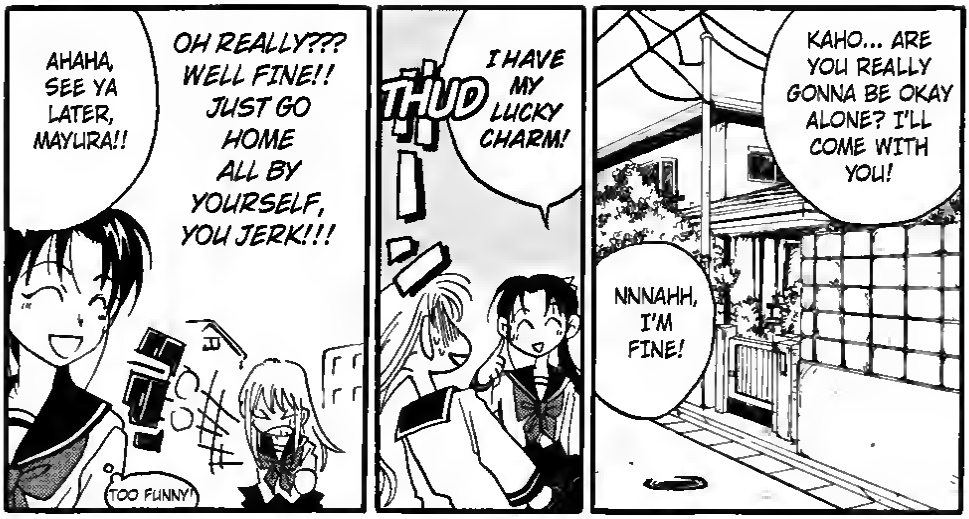

WELL KAHO, ARE WE DONE HERE!? LET'S GO HOME!!
HEY, YAMINO-KUN GET US SOME TEA, GO GET IT RIGHT NOW!


THROB
THROB
GRUMBLE
UGH, HIS STUPID PRETTYBOY AFFECTATIONS
PPT!


TWINGE
TWINGE

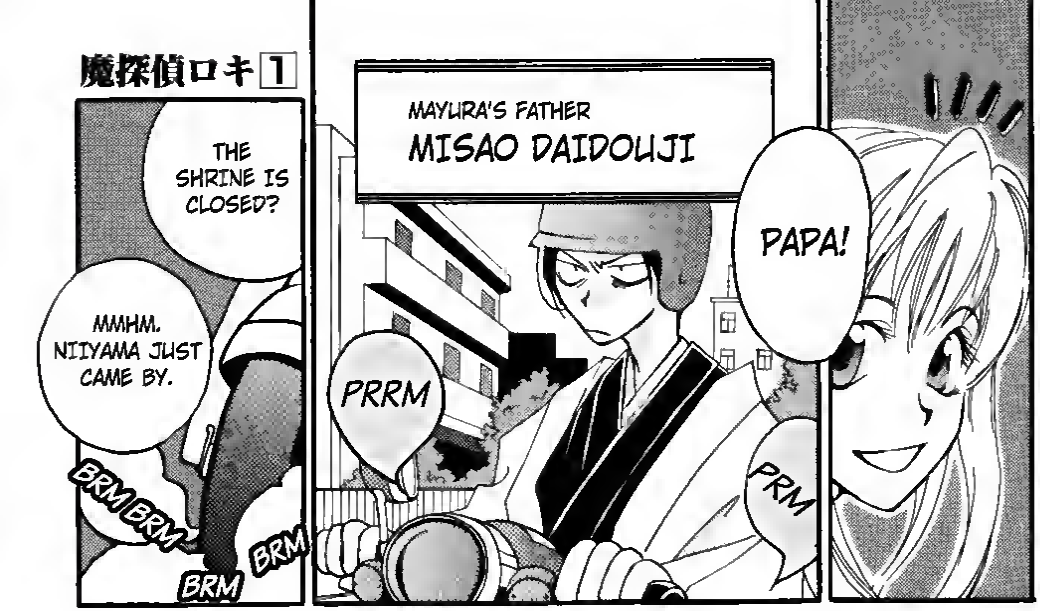

AFTER ALL THAT, YOU SEEM LIKE YOU DON'T HAVE A CARE IN THE WORLD...
SO YOU'RE ALL RIGHT NOW?
YEAHHH, I DON'T HAVE THAT FEELING LIKE I'M BEING FOLLOWED ANYMORE...
I CAN FEEL SAFE EVEN WALKING HOME WITH A PONY-TAIL AND ALL...
BECAUSE OF MY CHARMED EAR-RINGS.
OH, IS THAT SO...? WELL THEN I GUESS I SHOULDN'T HAVE WORRIED ABOUT YOU AT ALL, HUH!?
OH HOH?
MAYUKA ARE YOU JEALOUS?
N-NO!! I'M NOT!

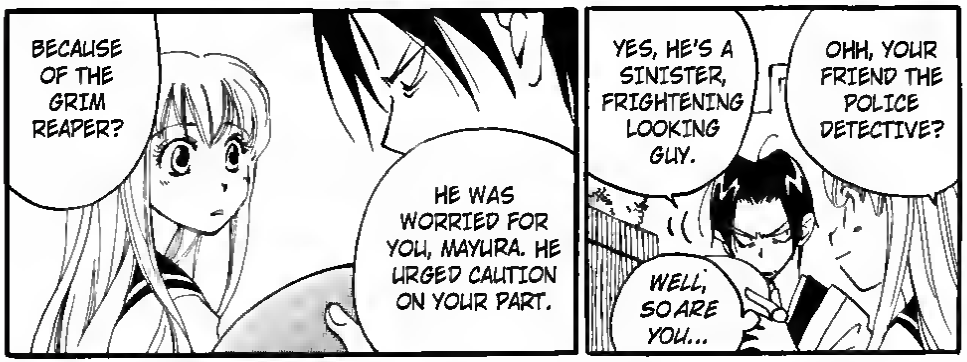
HEY, DID YOU HEAR?
THERE'S MORE RUMORS ABOUT THE GRIM REAPER IN HERE!
PAYIN!!
IT SAYS... THE GRIM REAPER APPEARS JUST BEFORE A HUGE RAINSTORM...
IT HASN'T RAINED IN A BIT, BUT WITH WEATHER LIKE TODAY'S, YA BETTER WATCH OUT!
AH!
LET'S GO HOME, KAHO!
WHAT THE, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU PUT YOUR FAITH IN THIS TRASHY GIRLY MAG, YOU WEIRDO!!
TOSS
EHEH
FLIP FLIP FLIP
W-WHOA, HEY!
SNATCH
YOU JERK! WAY TO BE INSENSITIVE!

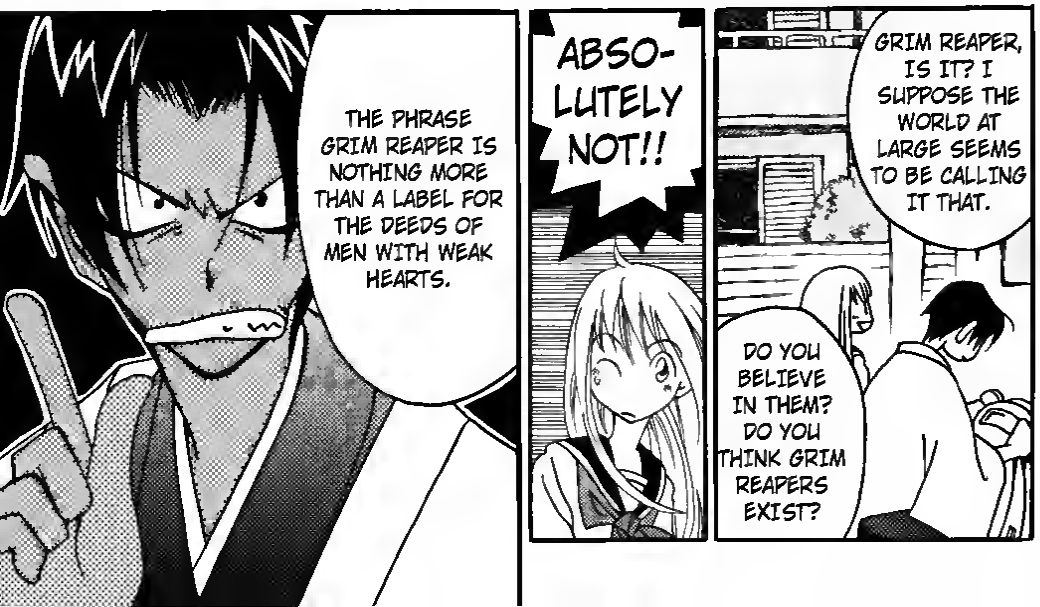

AHAHA, SEE YA LATER, MAYURA!!
OH REALLY??? WELL FINE!! JUST GO HOME ALL BY YOURSELF, YOU JERK!!!
TOO FUNNY!
THUD
I HAVE MY LUCKY CHARM!
KAHO... ARE YOU REALLY GONNA BE OKAY ALONE? I'LL COME WITH YOU!
NNNAHH, I'M FINE!

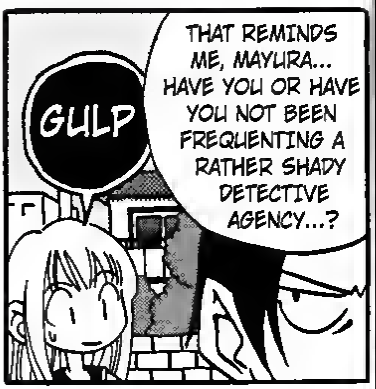
TICK
TICK
...IT'S STILL A GOOD IDEA TO HURRY ON HOME...
I'M NOT REALLY WORRIED ABOUT THE RUMORS, BUT...

TICK
TICK
FWUSH
EXCUSE ME...
YOUNG LADY...
COULD YOU TELL ME THE...
YES?

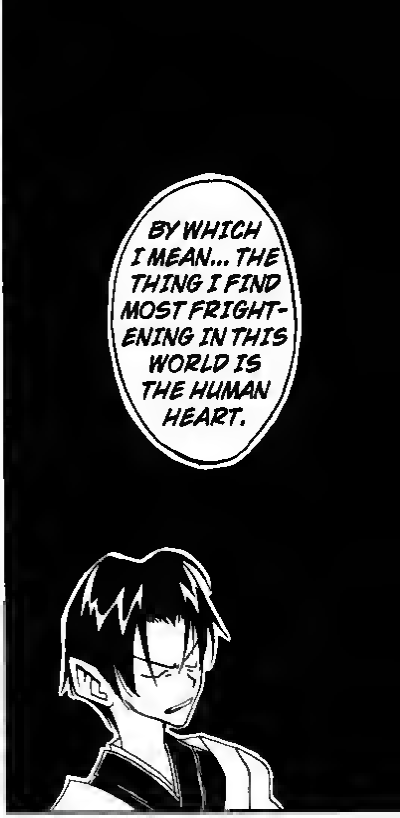

THE SHRINE IS CLOSED?
MMHM. NIIYAMA JUST CAME BY.
BRM BRM
BRM
BRM
MAYURA'S FATHER
MISAO DAIDOUJI
PRRM
PRM
PAPA!


BECAUSE OF THE GRIM REAPER?
HE WAS WORRIED FOR YOU, MAYURA. HE URGED CAUTION ON YOUR PART.
YES, HE'S A SINISTER, FRIGHTENING LOOKING GUY.
OHH, YOUR FRIEND THE POLICE DETECTIVE?
WELL, SO ARE YOU...


THE PHRASE GRIM REAPER IS NOTHING MORE THAN A LABEL FOR THE DEEDS OF MEN WITH WEAK HEARTS.
ABSO-LUTELY NOT!!
GRIM REAPER, IS IT? I SUPPOSE THE WORLD AT LARGE SEEMS TO BE CALLING IT THAT.
DO YOU BELIEVE IN THEM? DO YOU THINK GRIM REAPERS EXIST?


GULP
THAT REMINDS ME, MAYURA... HAVE YOU OR HAVE YOU NOT BEEN FREQUENTING A RATHER SHADY DETECTIVE AGENCY...?

.....


BY WHICH I MEAN... THE THING I FIND MOST FRIGHTENING IN THIS WORLD IS THE HUMAN HEART.

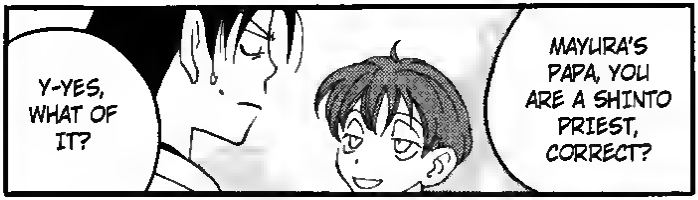
N-NOO! IT WAS MY FRIEND WHO WAS...
AND BESIDES, YOU MAY BE SPEAKING TO THEM ABOUT THE "GRIM REAPER"

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
...THE TRUE REASON FOR MY INTEREST IS THAT KEEPING THOSE RECKLESS ACTS TO A MINIMUM WILL BE YOUR BEST DEFENSE.
AT ANY RATE, MY LITTLE TOMBOY...

I AGREE WITH YOU WHOLEHEARTEDLY.
YOU ARE EXACTLY CORRECT, MAYURA'S PAPA.
CLAP
CLAP

KACHK
KACHK
KACHK

OH, I'M THE PROPRIETOR OF THE STRANGE DETECTIVE AGENCY YOU MENTIONED.
WHY, YES.
ARE YOU OUT SHOPPING?
WHA- WHO IN BLAZES ARE YOU!?


Y-YES, WHAT OF IT?
MAYURA'S PAPA, YOU ARE A SHINTO PRIEST, CORRECT?

Y...YES WELL...
?
WOMMM
THEY DON'T EXIST, RIGHT?

DEMONS AND GRIM REAPERS...
GRIN

HEH

AH! PAPA? WHAT'S WRONG?
...MY APOLOGIES... I FEEL LIGHT-HEADED..
I WILL HEAD HOME EARLY...
THAT'S SO WEIIIRD... HE WAS SO UPBEAT JUST NOW, TOO!
BRM
BRM
BRM

NHH..
AW
WH-WHERE AM...
OH MY...
YOU WENT AND WOKE UP...?
I SUPPOSE MY SKILLS AS A HYPNOTIST HAVE GONE A BIT OFF...
FSH
WELL... IT'S FINE... JUST WAIT A TINY LITTLE BIT LONGER, AND THE RAIN WILL START...
WAIT... WHAT!? MY BODY IS COMPLETELY NUMB... I CAN'T MOVE!!
THERE'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT AT ALL! IT'LL JUST BE A BIT LONGER...
WHAT IS THIS!?
...THEN I'LL ALLOW YOU TO JOIN MY COLLECTION.

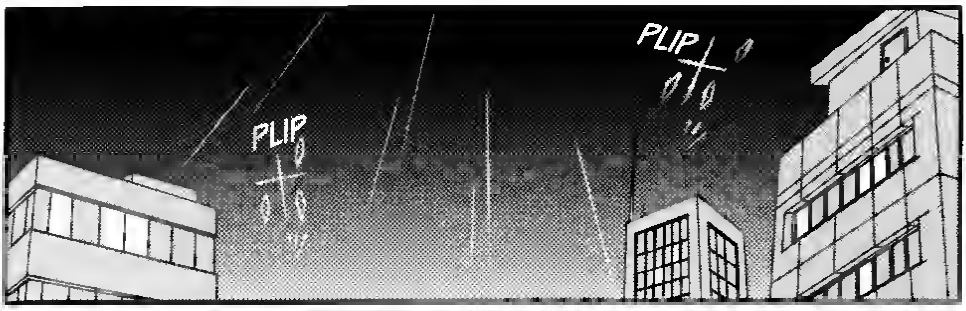
I'M JUST A COLLECTOR. THAT'S ALL. EVEN THOUGH THE WORLD HAS GIVEN ME SUCH A WEIRD NICKNAME...
WHO..?

WHEN IT COMES TO PICKING GREAT SPECIMENS FOR MY COLLECTION. IT'S GOTTA BE *REALLY* CUTE OR I WON'T EVEN TRY!
WELL. THAT'S ENOUGH OF THAT. YOU'RE AN AMAZING ONE!

LOOK AT THEM. THEY'RE ALL SO COMPLETELY CUTE!
KLACK

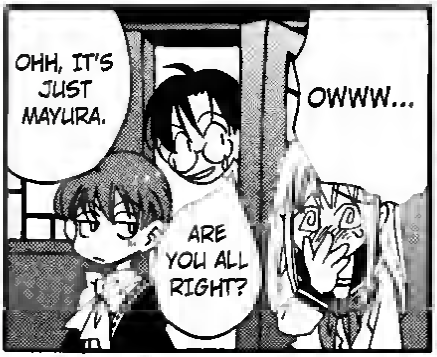
EVEN THOUGH COLLECTING CUTE THINGS IS A PRETTY NORMAL HOBBY!
IT'S NOT FAIR... WHY DO THEY CALL ME SUCH A TERRIBLE NAME?

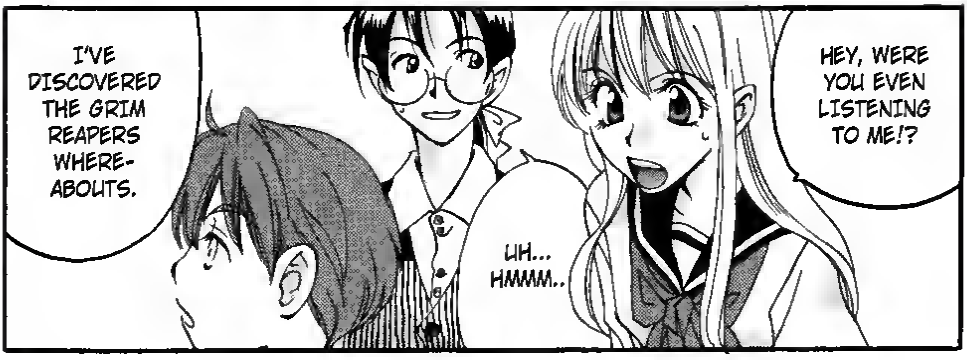
AH....
FLICKER
FLICKER
WHAT DO YOU THINK? HOW IS MY COLLECTION...?
AAAAAAAAAAAA


PLIP
PLIP

SLAM!
ARGH!!

KAHO'S MOM CALLED ME AND SHE SAID THAT KAHO HASN'T COME HOME YET!
ドーンドーン
BANG BANG
SOME-THING MUST HAVE HAP-
ドン
BANG


OHH, IT'S JUST MAYURA.
OWWW...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?


I'VE DISCOVERED THE GRIM REAPERS WHERE-ABOUTS.
UH... HMMM..
HEY, WERE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME!?

AND YOUR FRIEND IS WITH HIM.
W-WELL NOT THE EXACT LOCAT-
WAVE
WAVE
WHAT!?

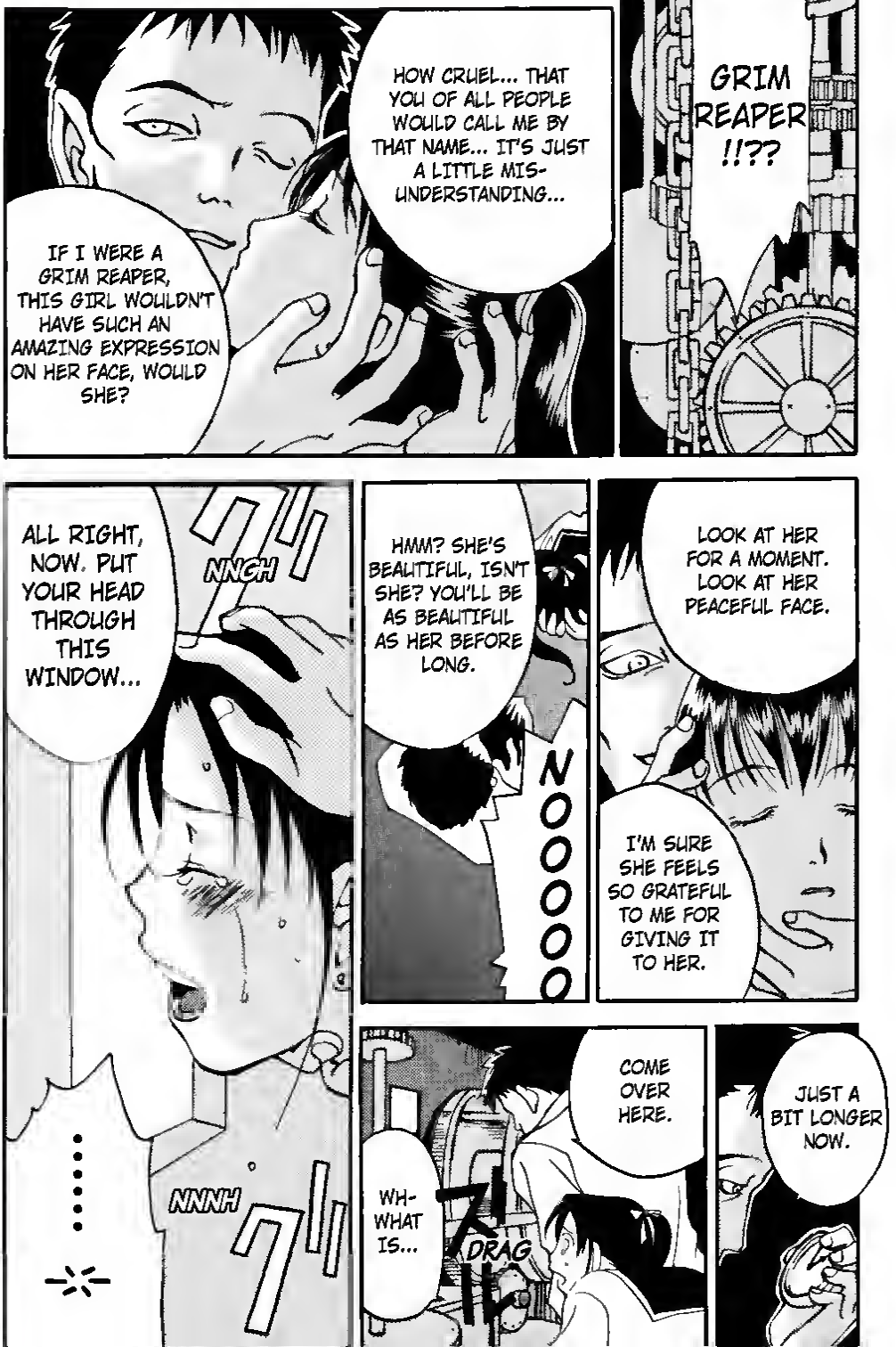
.....
BUT IF SHE FOLLOWS...
I AM JUST LEAVING TO GO THERE NOW. I'M BUSY AND I HAVE NO TIME TO DEAL WITH YOU.
POINT!!
WHAAAAT!!??

PLEASE! TAKE ME WITH YOU!!
OH NO, MAYURA-SAN, YOU MUST STAY HERE AND WAIT FOR OUR RETURN...

BUT... KAHO....
SNIFFLE

THAT CAN'T BE TRUE! KAHO'S WITH THE REAPER...!?

I CAN'T JUST WAIT FOR IT TO HAPPEN!!
BUT KAHO'S GONNA DIE!
WHAT WILL HAPPEN THERE, I HAVE NO IDEA.
HOWEVER, IF YOU WANT TO COME ALONG, I'LL ALLOW YOU TO COME.
.....
MAYURA.
WHAT IS LOKI-KUN GOING TO DO?
ALL RIGHT, LET'S HURRY!
PATTER PATTER
.....
OKAY.

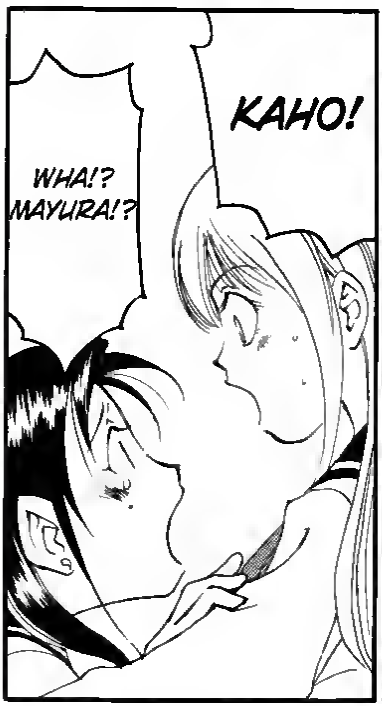

GRIM REAPER !!??
HOW CRUEL... THAT YOU OF ALL PEOPLE WOULD CALL ME BY THAT NAME... IT'S JUST A LITTLE MIS-UNDERSTANDING...
IF I WERE A GRIM REAPER, THIS GIRL WOULDN'T HAVE SUCH AN AMAZING EXPRESSION ON HER FACE, WOULD SHE?
LOOK AT HER FOR A MOMENT. LOOK AT HER PEACEFUL FACE.
I'M SURE SHE FEELS SO GRATEFUL TO ME FOR GIVING IT TO HER.
HMM? SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T SHE? YOU'LL BE AS BEAUTIFUL AS HER BEFORE LONG.
NOOOOO
ALL RIGHT, NOW. PUT YOUR HEAD THROUGH THIS WINDOW...
NNGH
NNNH
COME OVER HERE.
WH-WHAT IS...
DRAG
JUST A BIT LONGER NOW.

NOOOOOO
FSH
XII
I
II
III
IV
V
VI
VII
VIII
IX
X
YOU ARE SO INCREDIBLY CUTE...
SO WITH THE HANDS OF THIS GIANT CLOCK, I WILL ALLOW YOU TO JOIN MY COLLECTION..

!
ALL RIGHT. THAT'S FAR ENOUGH!
SLAM

!!
STEP
H-HELP!

I'VE FINALLY FOUND YOU, MR. GRIM REAPER.


KAHO!
WHA!? MAYURA!?

PANT
PANT
....WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO STOP ME....?
INTERRUPTING MY PRECIOUS PASTIME...!!
PANT

W-WAIT, WHAT DOES HE MEAN BY THAT?

OH, DID I FIND YOU TOO QUICKLY? YOU WANTED MORE TIME TO PLAY?
IT WAS YOUR OWN BAD LUCK TO CAST YOUR EYE UPON A FRIEND OF MAYURA'S...

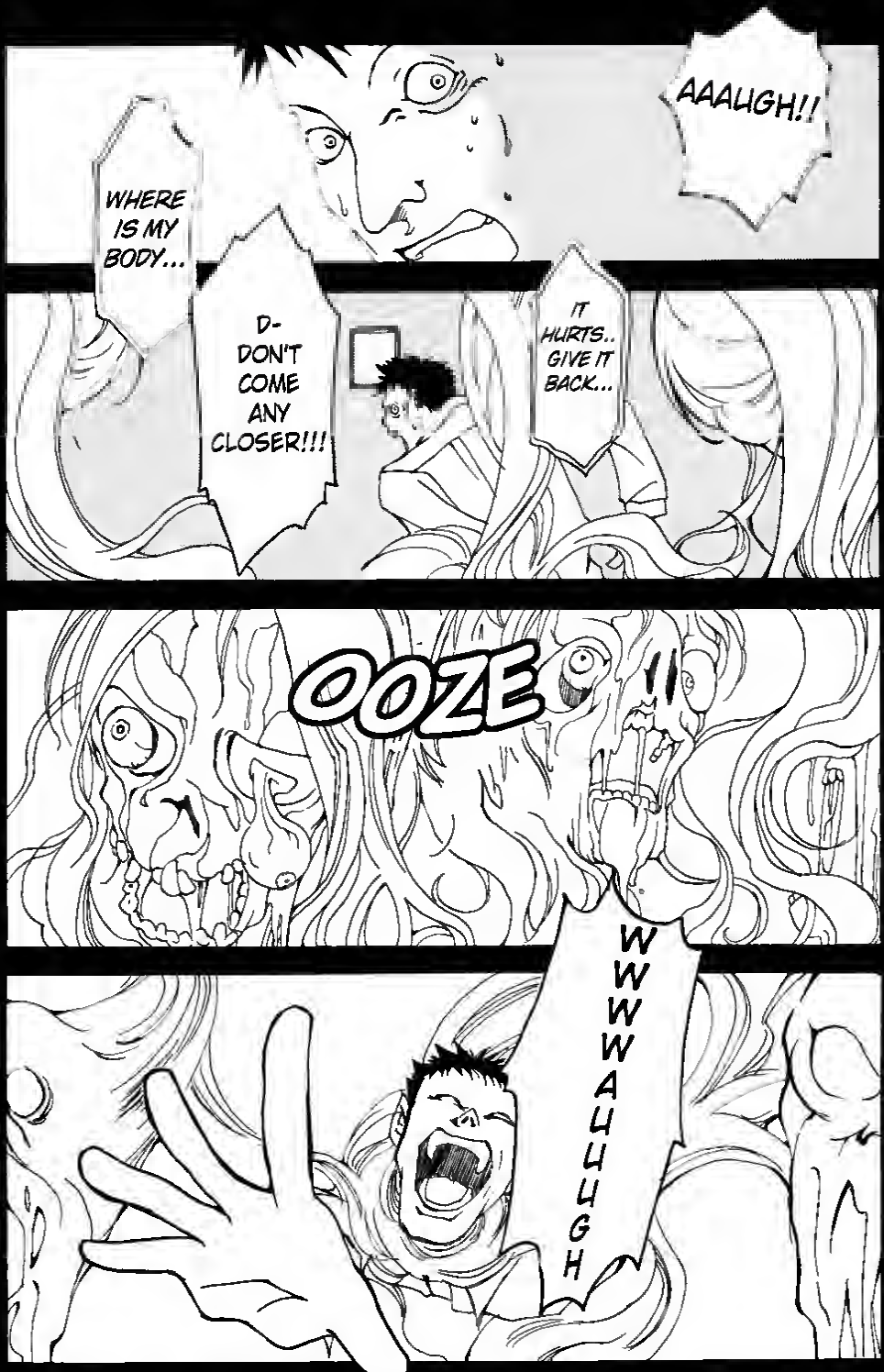
WH...
ON A RAINY NIGHT, A GRIM REAPER WITH TWO GIANT SCYTHES SEARCHES FOR HIS BRIDE... THAT'S THE CORE OF IT, RIGHT?
THE RUMORS WERE S SURPRISINGLY FOOLISH, WEREN'T THEY?

YEAH, WHAT IS THIS!?
WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU-
TICK
I AM MUCH MORE SKILLED IN THE ART OF HYPNOTISM THAN THAT MAN, YOU SEE.
TICK
TICK
WOOSH
AH, YOUNG LADIES, THIS MAY BE A BIT TOO MUCH FOR YOU TO BEAR, SO THAT'S ALL YOU GET!
I ANGERED A VERY GREAT GOD AND WAS SENT TO THE HUMAN WORLD IN EXILE.
I AM A GOD WITH DOMINION OVER LIES AND MISCHIEF... AND YOU'VE GOTTEN UP TO SOME VERY BAD MISCHIEF HERE...
HUP
WHICH IS NOT TO SAY I ENJOY THIS. I'M NOT TAKING IT OUT ON YOU...
EXHAUSTION
SLIP

IF I DO NOT BANISH THE DEMONS THAT INFEST HUMAN HEARTS, I WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO RETURN TO THE REALM OF THE GODS, YOU SEE.
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU EVEN TALKING ABOUT, KID?
SO... THIS IS MY JOB.
I WILL BANISH THE EVIL THAT HAS INFESTED YOU.
FWOOSH
HMM...
AT FIRST IT WAS SIMPLE UNREQUITED LOVE FOR A PURE GIRL.

PERHAPS YOU WERE IN A HURRY AND DIDN'T WANT TO BE SEEN?
YOU TOOK HER TO THIS CLOCK TOWER... ...NOT KNOWING WHAT YOU WERE GOING TO DO.
THEN YOU USED YOUR SKILLS IN HYPNOTISM...
BUT THEN WHEN THE YOUNG WOMAN AWOKE, SUDDENLY FINDING HERSELF IN THIS SITUATION.. AND SHE PANICKED.
LOOKING FOR AN ESCAPE, SHE STUCK HER HEAD OUT THIS WINDOW.
THE HOUR WAS NEARLY 12:00...
IT WAS A SIMPLE ACCIDENT.
BUT WHEN YOU SAW THE FRESHLY SEVERED HEAD...

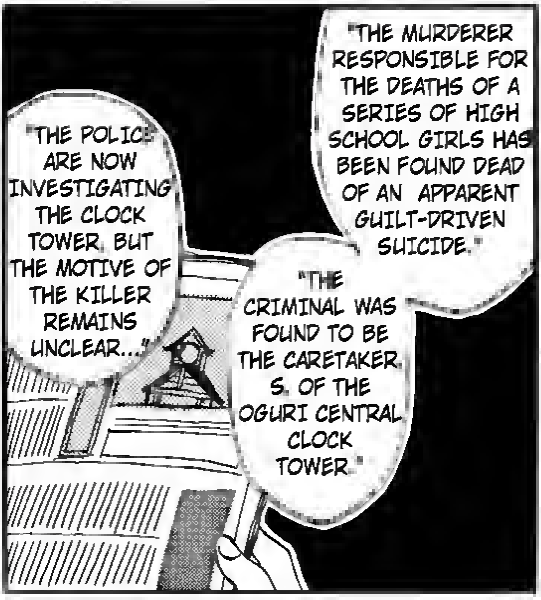
BY THE SIGHT OF THIS EVIL.
YOUR HEART WAS TRANSFIXED..
BUT MR. COLLECTOR, IT'S LAUGHABLE!
AND YOU CONTINUED TO PERFORM THIS RITUAL, HERE AT THIS CLOCK TOWER....
ARE JUST AN ILLUSION.
THE BODIES OF THE DEAD DECAY, YOU KNOW.
THESE GIRLS' FRESH HEADS THAT YOU'VE MADE...
THIS IS THE TRUE FACE OF THE COLLECTION THAT YOU HAVE MADE....
...GIVE ME BACK MY BODY...
LOOK! LOOK VERY CAREFULLY.
GIVE IT BACK...
TUMBLE


AAAUGH!!
WHERE IS MY BODY...
D- DON'T COME ANY CLOSER!!!
IT HURTS.. GIVE IT BACK...
OOZE
WWWAUUUGH

DEMONS ARE NO-WHERE NEAR AS SCARY AS HUMANS, EH?
WELL THEN, WHAT TO DO WITH THESE GIRLS...?
I SHALL CARRY THEM OUTSIDE.
IT WAS SIMPLE ENOUGH TO SOLVE THIS ONE, GIVEN A HUGE MYSTERY FAN LIKE MAYURA-SAN.
WONNER IF SH' CAUGHT ONM..
NGA
USING YOUR FANG WAS A BRILLIANT SUB-STITUTE FOR A COMMUNICATOR, YOU SEE. IT LED US RIGHT HERE.
PLINK
A JOB WELL DONE, LOKI-SAMA.
OH, YES THAT'S RIGHT, THE EARRINGS.

SLSH
KACHUNK
WEEOOOOOOO
WEEOOOOOOO
THIS IS THE CLOCK TOWER THAT THE MESS-AGE MENTIONED. WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?
WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS THING...
WH-!
WAIT A TIC, ISN'T THAT BLOOD UP THERE!?
WAIT... TWO SLICING WEAPONS?
THE DOUBLE-WIELDING GRIM REAPER...!?

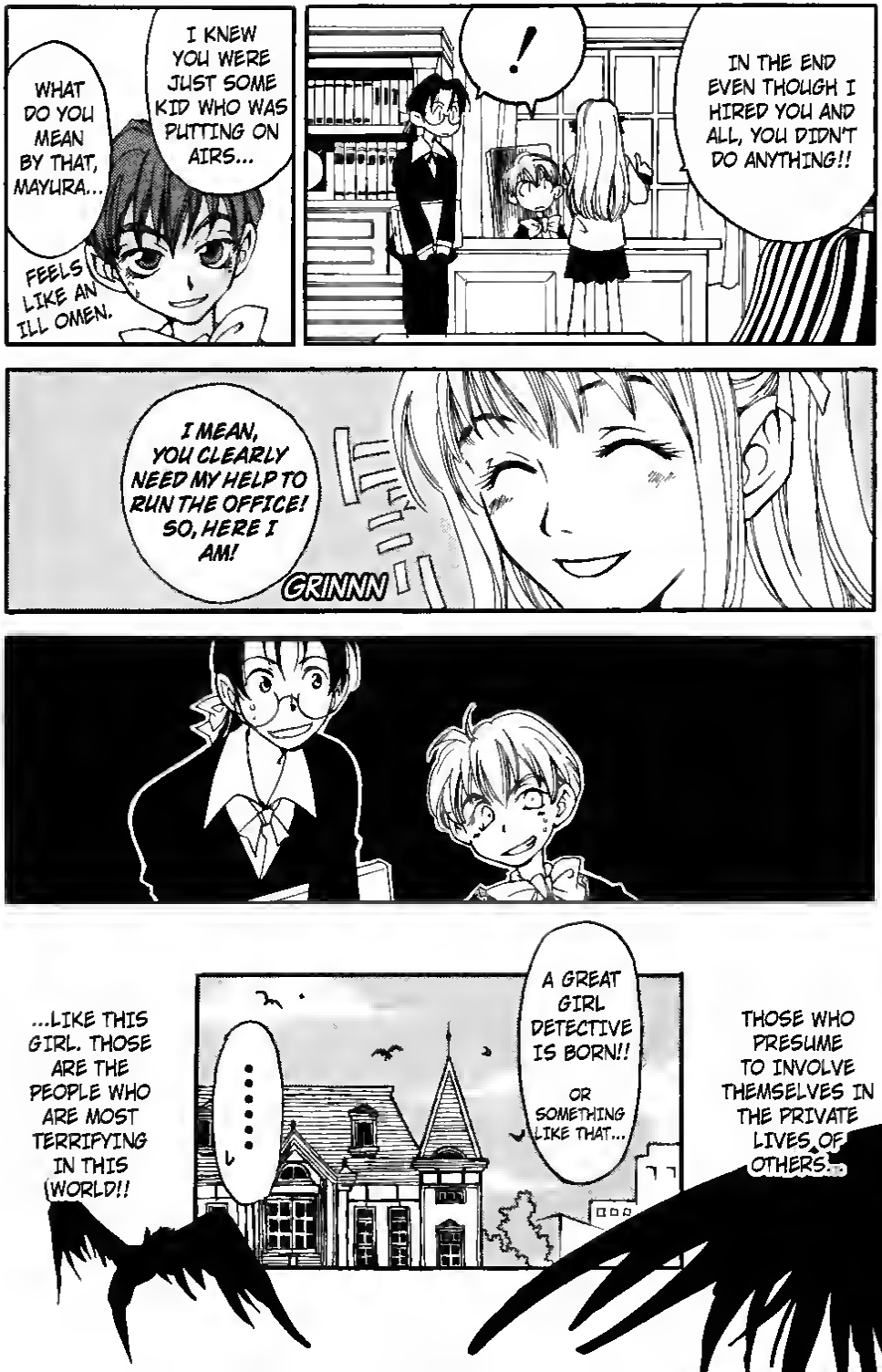
WHEN I GOT THERE THE KILLER HAD KAHO IN HIS GRASP, YEAH?
WOW, THAT WAS SURE A REALLY NARROW ESCAPE!
RUSTLE

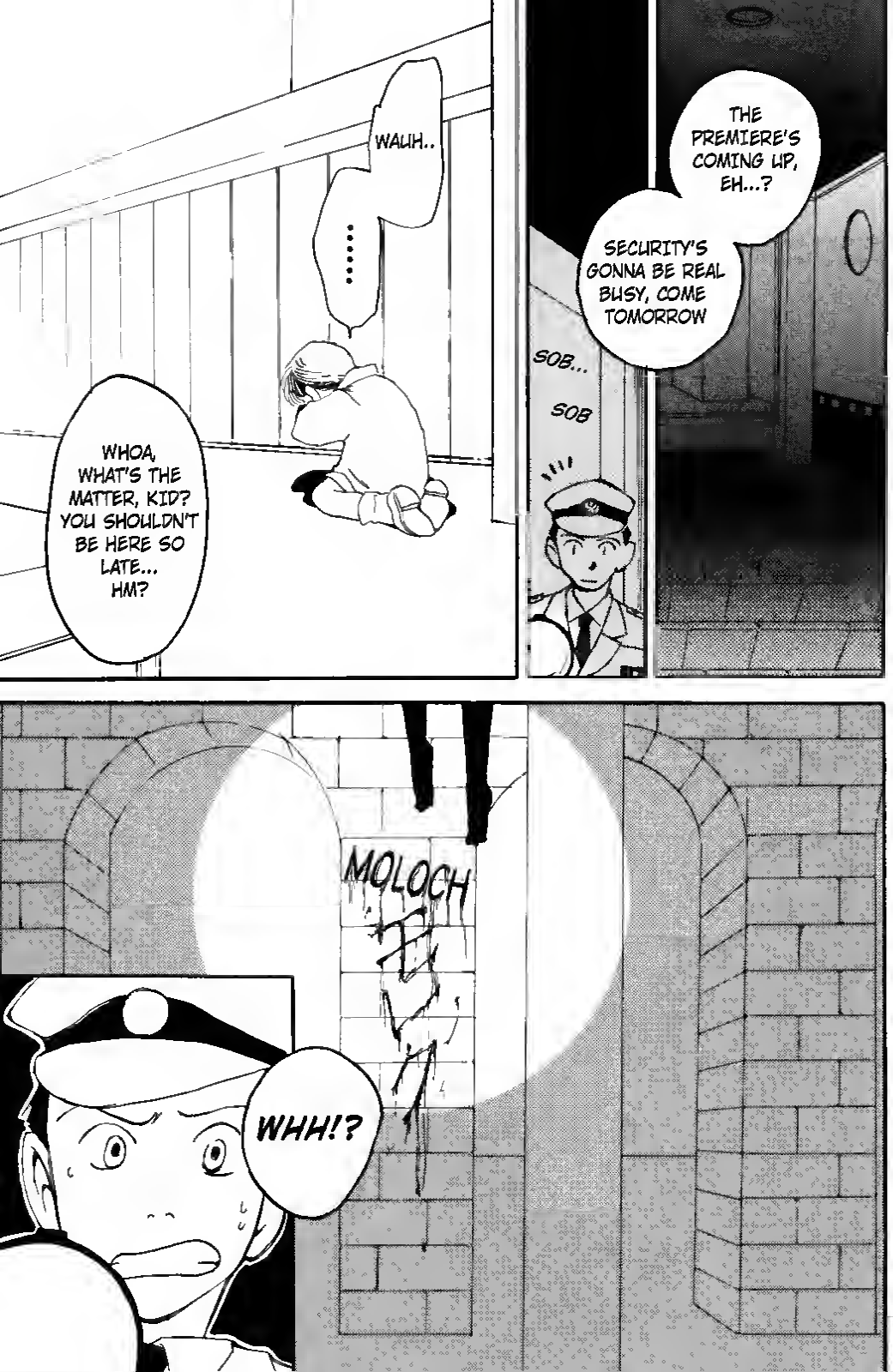

"THE MURDERER RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF A SERIES OF HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS HAS BEEN FOUND DEAD OF AN APPARENT GUILT-DRIVEN SUICIDE."
"THE POLICE ARE NOW INVESTIGATING THE CLOCK TOWER, BUT THE MOTIVE OF THE KILLER REMAINS UNCLEAR..."
"THE CRIMINAL WAS FOUND TO BE THE CARETAKER, S. OF THE OGURI CENTRAL CLOCK TOWER."

IT'S A GOOD THING I SENT A MESSAGE TO THE POLICE SAYING WHERE WE'D BE. LOOKS LIKE I WRAPPED THIS ONE UP IN THE END!!
WHAT IN THE WORLD...
WHISPER
WHISPER
YOU SEE, I ERASED ALL OF HER MEMORIES CONCERNING US FROM JUST BEFORE THE INCIDENT.

YOU KNOW WHAT, I CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER AT ALL! IT MUST HAVE BEEN THAT I WAS JUST SO FOCUSED ON SAVING KAHO THAT EVERYTHING ELSE WAS UN-IMPORTANT!
SLIIIDE
IT'S PRETTY FANTASTIC THAT SHE'S GOING THIS FAR WITH IT!!

AH I SEE...
THAT'S QUITE A FEAT, MAYURA. SO, I JUST MUST KNOW... WHAT KIND OF A PERSON WAS THIS MURDERER?


I KNEW YOU WERE JUST SOME KID WHO WAS PUTTING ON AIRS...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT, MAYURA...
FEELS LIKE AN ILL OMEN.
!
IN THE END EVEN THOUGH I HIRED YOU AND ALL, YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!!
I MEAN, YOU CLEARLY NEED MY HELP TO RUN THE OFFICE! SO, HERE I AM!
GRINNN
A GREAT GIRL DETECTIVE IS BORN!!
OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
...LIKE THIS GIRL. THOSE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO ARE MOST TERRIFYING IN THIS WORLD!!
THOSE WHO PRESUME TO INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN THE PRIVATE LIVES OF OTHERS...


WAUH..
.....
WHOA, WHAT'S THE MATTER, KID? YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE SO LATE... HM?
THE PREMIERE'S COMING UP, EH...?
SECURITY'S GONNA BE REAL BUSY, COME TOMORROW
SOB..
SOB
MOLOCH
WHH!?

MOLOCH
AUUUGGGHH!!
AU...

NIGHT 2
THE CURSED STAGE (ACT ONE)

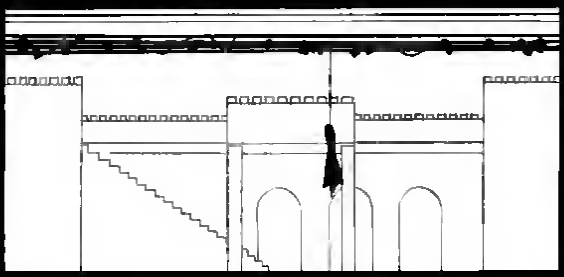
OH YEAH... YURI-CHAN IS EVEN MORE CUTE IN PERSON, JUST LIKE I KNEW SHE WOULD BE!
EH HEH HEH HEH HEH
I GUESS THAT'S WHY THEY CALL HER THE QUEEN OF THE MODELING WORLD.
UGH, CUT IT OUT WITH THAT CREEPY LAUGH, LOKI-KUN.

OH YEAH IT'S A SUPER-REFINED HOBBY....
A CUTE GIRL IS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL THING A GOD CAN CREATE. TO MAKE FUN OF SUCH A THING IS A SIN. A SIN, I TELL YOU!
MAYURA!
ALTHOUGH... THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE A LITTLE CRUSH ON A POP IDOL...
YOU ACT BIG, BUT YOU'RE STILL A KID AT HEART!
THANK YOU!
NO WORRIES! AFTER ALL IT'S YOUR FIRST PLAY! AND NOT ONLY THAT BUT A STARRING ROLE! CONGRATULATIONS!
SHAKE SHAKE
PHEW, I'TS FINALLY TME FOR A BREAK. SORRY, I SAW YOU OVER THERE WAITING TO CALL FOR ME SO I HAD TO COME OVER.
BRAND NEW ACTRESS
YURI AOBA (18)
WHIRL
WHIRL
OH, RIGHT, DID YOU BRING THE DETECTIVE YOU SAID YOU KNEW?
AH!
YOU MUST BE HIM, RIGHT?

THIS IS LITTLE BIRD DETECTIVE AGENCY'S RESIDENT DETECTIVE, LOKI-SAMA.
I'M MERELY HIS RIGHT HAND MAN, CALL ME YAMINO.
NOW NOW, YURI-CHAN... YOU'LL HURT MY FEELINGS BY MAKING SUCH A MISSTEP!
TUT TUT TUT!
IT'S KIND OF A LONG STORY TO TELL, SO I'LL JUST SHOW YOU.
ASSIS-TANT...?
DOESN'T MATTER! I'M HERE AS AN ASSISTANT, SO TELL ME ALL ABOUT YOUR PROBLEMS!
IT'S NOT LIKE THAT'S AN UNUSUAL REACTION...
BUH
DUN
WHAAAA!?
"STEP DOWN FROM THE LEAD ROLE, ELSE YOU TOO WILL BE SACRIFICED TO MOLOCH, JUST AS HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO."
MOLOCH?
OMG!! IT'S JUST LIKE ON TV!!!
SHHH, MAYURA, NOT SO LOUD...
THIS KIND OF PERSON IS NOT QUALIFIED TO BE A DETEC-TIVE.
WH-A THREAT!?
DUNNNN

HE'S A DEMON LORD THAT APPEARS IN THE PLAY I'M DOING.
HE COMES TO KILL THE QUEEN AS A SACRIFICE
STEP
dn
FROM
THE
LEAD
ROLE
else
you too
sacrificed to moloch
YRS
JUST
WHOA... CREEPY!
SO IT'S HATE MAIL. SENT BY SOMEONE WHO'S VERY PUT OUT BY YOU GETTING THE LEAD ROLE, YURI-CHAN.
SNATCH
WHAT DOES IT MEAN BY TEN YEARS AGO....?
WELL... YOU SEE WHEN THIS PLAY WAS PUT ON TEN YEARS AGO, THE LEAD ACTRESS DIED.
WHAAT!?

THE NIGHT BEFORE OPENING DAY, THEY FOUND HER HANGING ABOVE THE STAGE.

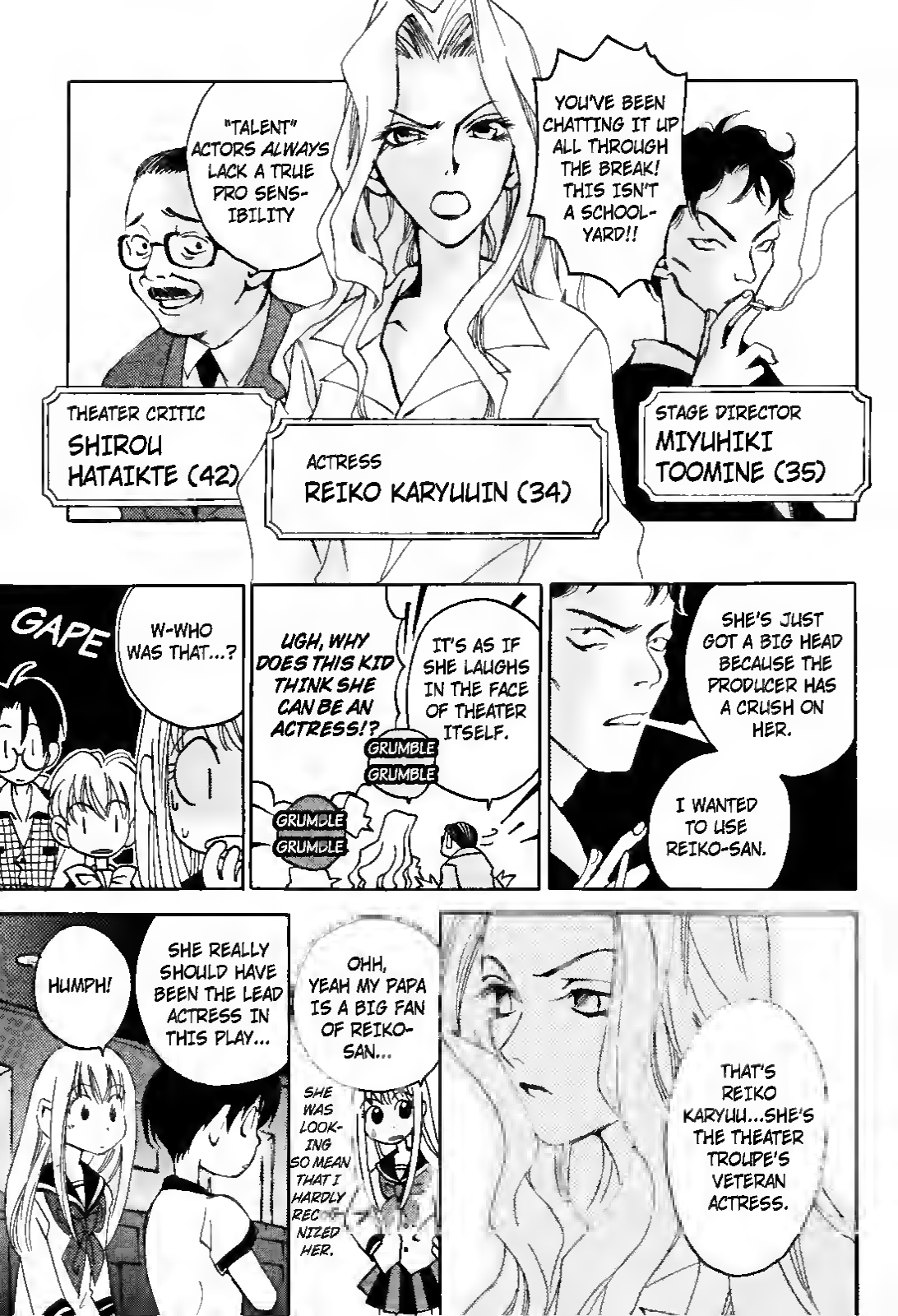


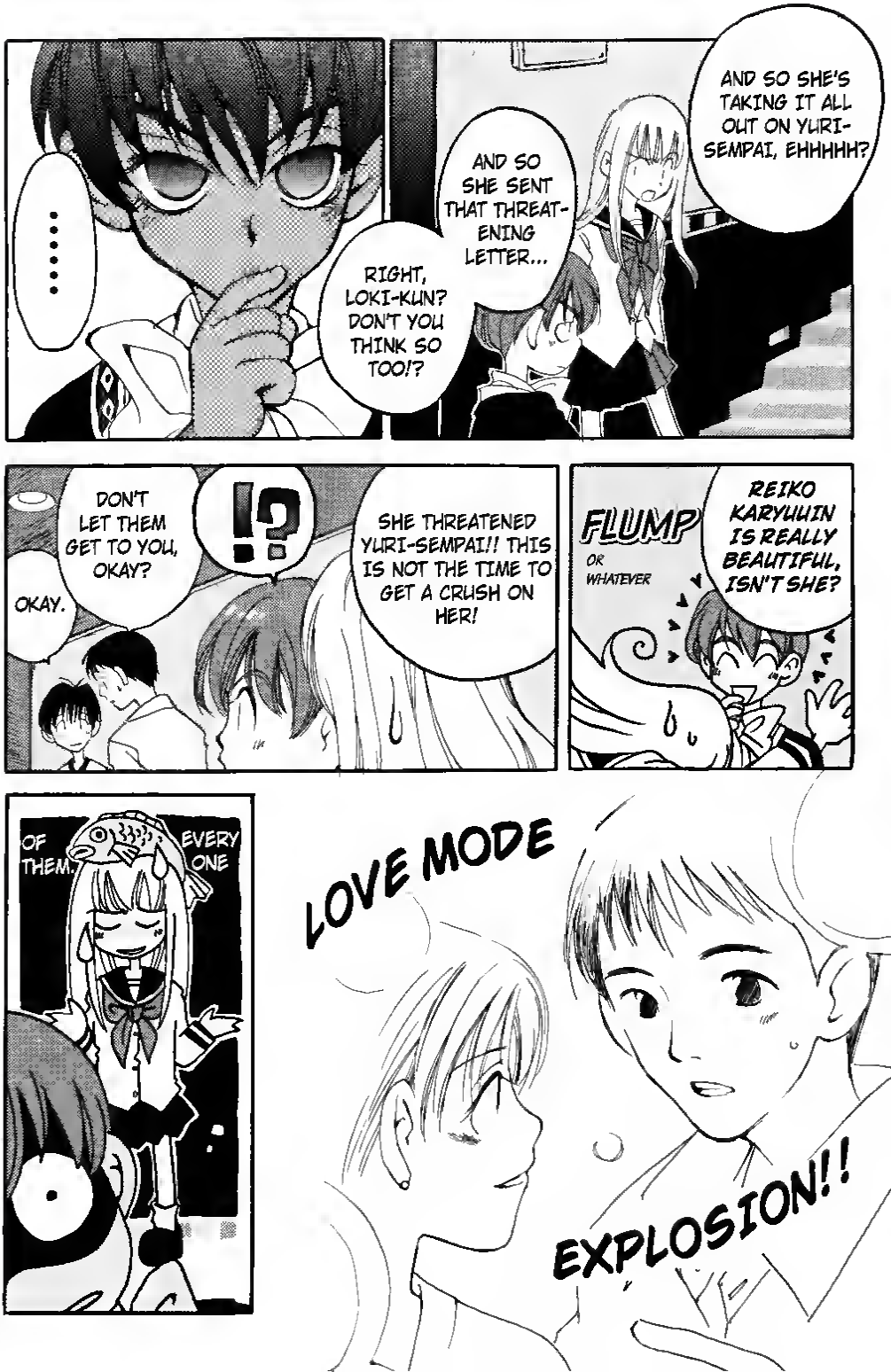
AFTER THAT, NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES THEY'VE ATTEMPTED TO PUT ON THIS PLAY, TROUBLES POPPED UP AND IT NEVER ACTUALLY HAPPENED.

SINCE THEN THE PLAY'S BEEN CALLED "THE CURSED STAGE."

TELL ME, YURI-CHAN. HOW EXACTLY DID YOU COME TO BE INVOLVED IN THIS PLAY?
SINCE PEOPLE HAVE ACTUALLY DIED, I'M REALLY WORRIED...
OH, HER AFFLICTION IS MANIFESTING
BA-DUMP
BA-DUMP
THE CURSED STAGE....!? S-SOUNDS LIKE A REAL MYSTERY!
CLENCH

AOBA-SAN!!
.....
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU WOULD ASSUME, CONSIDERING A THREATNING LETTER?
YES, MAYURA, BUT IT ALSO MEANS THAT THERE ARE THOSE WHO MAY BE JEALOUS.
THEY CALLED ME UP AS A GUEST ACTOR. I'M NOT ACTUALLY A PART OF THIS THEATER TROUPE.
GUESTING AS THE MAIN PART!! THAT'S AMAZING! YOU'RE SO POPULAR!


"TALENT" ACTORS ALWAYS LACK A TRUE PRO SENS-IBILITY
YOU'VE BEEN CHATTING IT UP ALL THROUGH THE BREAK! THIS ISN'T A SCHOOL-YARD!!
THEATER CRITIC SHIROU HATAIKTE (42)
ACTRESS REIKO KARYUUIN (34)
STAGE DIRECTOR MIYUHIKI TOOMINE (35)
GAPE
W-WHO WAS THAT...?
UGH, WHY DOES THIS KID THINK SHE CAN BE AN ACTRESS!?
IT'S AS IF SHE LAUGHS IN THE FACE OF THEATER ITSELF.
GRUMBLE
GRUMBLE
GRUMBLE
GRUMBLE
SHE'S JUST GOT A BIG HEAD BECAUSE THE PRODUCER HAS A CRUSH ON HER.
I WANTED TO USE REIKO-SAN.
HUMPH!
SHE REALLY SHOULD HAVE BEEN THE LEAD ACTRESS IN THIS PLAY...
OHH, YEAH MY PAPA IS A BIG FAN OF REIKO-SAN...
SHE WAS LOOK-ING SO MEAN THAT I HARDLY REC-NIZED HER.
THAT'S REIKO KARYUU...SHE'S THE THEATER TROUPE'S VETERAN ACTRESS.


AND SO SHE'S TAKING IT ALL OUT ON YURI-SEMPAI, EHHHHH?
AND SO SHE SENT THAT THREAT-ENING LETTER...
RIGHT, LOKI-KUN? DON'T YOU THINK SO TOO!?
.....
!?
DON'T LET THEM GET TO YOU, OKAY?
OKAY.
SHE THREATENED YURI-SEMPAI!! THIS IS NOT THE TIME TO GET A CRUSH ON HER!
FLUMP
OR WHATEVER
REIKO KARYUUIN IS REALLY BEAUTIFUL, ISN'T SHE?
OF THEM.
EVERY ONE
LOVE MODE
EXPLOSION!!

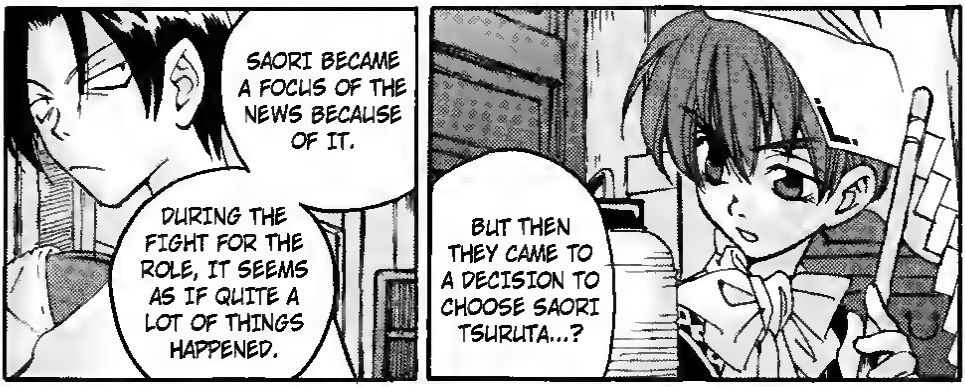
LET ME INTRODUCE YOU: THIS IS SUGAWARA-SAN, HE'S A TECHIE FOR THE TROUPE.
THEATER TROUPE STAFF
YUUICHI SUGAWARA (17)
HELLO THERE.
I'M IN THE MIDDLE OF WORK, SO SORRY F.OR THE GETUP.
I'M MAYURA DAIDOUJI.
STARE
SUGAWARA-KUN, CAN YOU DECIDE WHERE WE PUT THIS SET?
SURE, ONE SEC!
SEE YA AT THE PREMIERE, MAYURA-SAN. HOPE YOU CAN COME.
GOOD LUCK WITH EVERY-THING.
SUGAWARA-SAN SEEMS LIKE A REALLY NICE GUY.
YEAH. I FEEL LIKE IT'S BECAUSE OF HIM THAT I'VE BEEN ABLE TO MAKE IT THIS FAR, EVEN THOUGH THINGS HAVE BEEN SO HARD....
HMMM... THE AMAZING POWER OF THE ONE YOU LOVE.
OH GOSH, MAYURA! DON'T SAY, "THE ONE YOU LOVE," GOSHHHH!!
SLAP, SLAP
EEEEE EEEEE EEEEE!!
WH-WHAT... YURI-CHAN HAS A BOY-FRIEND...? I'M IN SHOCK.....
B-BY THE WAY... HOW DID YOU AND MAYURA-SAN BECOME FRIENDS, YURI-SAN?

THEN WE FIGURED OUT WE HAVE A LOT IN COMMON!
OHHH NO, A DOUBLE-BLOW!?
YURI-CHAN IS A WEIRDO LIKE MAYURA... DOUBLE SHOCK.....
DUN DUN DUNNN
T-TREMBLE
WE WERE IN THE SCHOOL'S MYSTERY CLUB TOGETHER!!
WHEN YURI-SEMPAI WAS STILL IN SCHOOL...
G-GAH!!
TAH-DAHHH
YES.....
WE'RE ALSO GONNA LOOK INTO THE ONE FROM TEN YEARS AGO!
RIGHT, LOKI-KUN!!
OH YEAH! YURI-SEMPAI, I ALMOST FORGOT IN ALL THE EXCITEMENT OF YOU BEING THE LEAD AND HAVING A BOYFRIEND, BUT WE'RE TOTALLY TAKING THIS CASE!
WITH ME ON THE CASE, YOU CAN ALREADY REST EASY!!
HEE HEE
GLEAM
!
THANKS SO MUCH FOR YOUR HELP, LOKI-KUN.
SMILE

THE DEMON LORD MOLOCH, EH...?
THAT SEEMS QUITE INTERESTING...
YURI-SEMPAI, LEAVE IT TO ME, I GOT YOU COVERED!!
ALL RIGHT, WHERE SHOULD WE START LOOKING?
YET IT'S A SHAME THAT SHE IS BEING TARGETED...
MURMUR
MURMUR
Y-YOU'RE THAT SHADY DETEC-TIVE!!
WHAT HAVE YOU COME TO DO!?
HOW'S IT GOING, MAYURA'S PAPA!?
POP!
WALILIGH!
....WHY AM I SEEING SIGNS OF EVIL SPIRITS....

MAYURA'S PAPA, YOU'RE A FAN OF REIKO KARYUUIN, RIGHT?
PAPAAAA... WE WANTED TO ASK YOU ABOUT SOME STUFF...!!
I FEEL BETTER.
MAYURA, HAVE YOU YET AGAIN GOTTEN TANGLED UP IN SOME MORE STRANGE THINGS...?
MY OWN DAUGHTER, SO SHAME-FUL....
TURN
TURN
YOU MEAN ABOUT SAORI TSURUDA?
RIGHT, YES. THIS SAORI TSURUDA, WHAT WAS SHE LIKE?
OH YEAH, I'M FEELIN GOOD
BLUSH
...W-WELL. A BIT.
WELL THEN, OF COURSE YOU MUST KNOW ALL ABOUT THE INCIDENT THAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS AGO...!
BACK THEN REIKO KARYUUIN AND SAORI TSURUDA WERE NEW ACTRESSES. POPULAR OPINION WAS SPLIT BETWEEN THE TWO OF THEM.
BOTH OF THEM WERE BEAUTIFUL, REFINED, AND CUTE.
BLUUSH~
GET A HOLD OF YOUR-SELF, PAPA!

AT FIRST, REIKO WAS THE ONE CONSIDERED THE POPULAR CANDIDATE...
YES, AND THEN TALK OF THAT ONE PLAY BEGAN TO BE BIG NEWS.
YOU'RE SAYING THAT THEY WERE RIVALS.

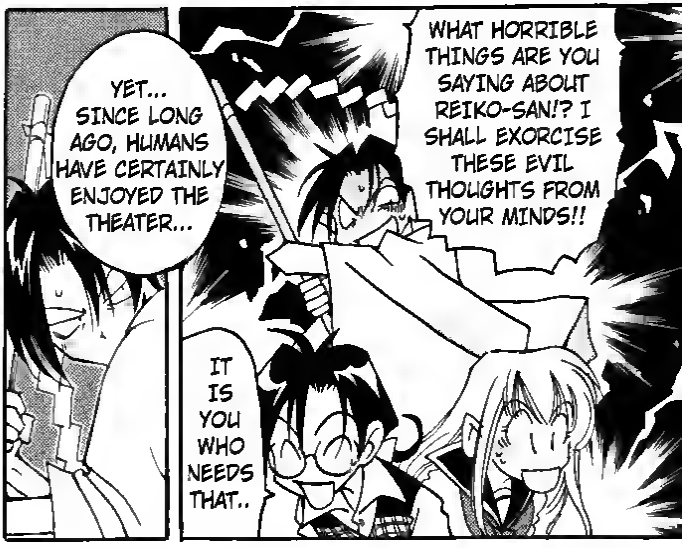

SAORI BECAME A FOCUS OF THE NEWS BECAUSE OF IT.
DURING THE FIGHT FOR THE ROLE, IT SEEMS AS IF QUITE A LOT OF THINGS HAPPENED.
BUT THEN THEY CAME TO A DECISION TO CHOOSE SAORI TSURUTA...?

MOLOCH
IT IS BELIEVED THAT DUE TO THE PRESSURE, SAORI BECAME TERRIBLY NEUROTIC AND UNSTABLE.
SHE WAS FOUND HANGING ABOVE THE STAGE, WITH THE WORD "MOLOCH" WRITTEN IN BLOOD BELOW. THE PLAY WAS CANCELED.

DUN DUN
AH, BUT REIKO WAS UNINVOLVED. SUCH A LOVELY AND REFINED WOMAN WOULD NOT HAVE ANY-THING TO DO WITH SUCH A THING!
WOOSH
SHE'S GOT YOU FOOLED, PAPA!!

HMMM... QUITE A SNEAKY STRATEGY...
WELL THEN, JUST LIKE BEFORE WE HAVE NO GOOD SUSPECTS FOR THE THREAT LETTER THAN REIKO-SAN.
THEN FOR REIKO-SAN, THIS REPRESENTS HER HEART'S DESIRE FOR TEN LONG YEARS...
TO BE THE ONE WHO GETS THE LEAD ROLE IN THIS PARTICULAR PLAY....
YOINK

IN TRUTH, INTERACTING WITH OTHERS IS ACTING ENOUGH IN ITSELF.

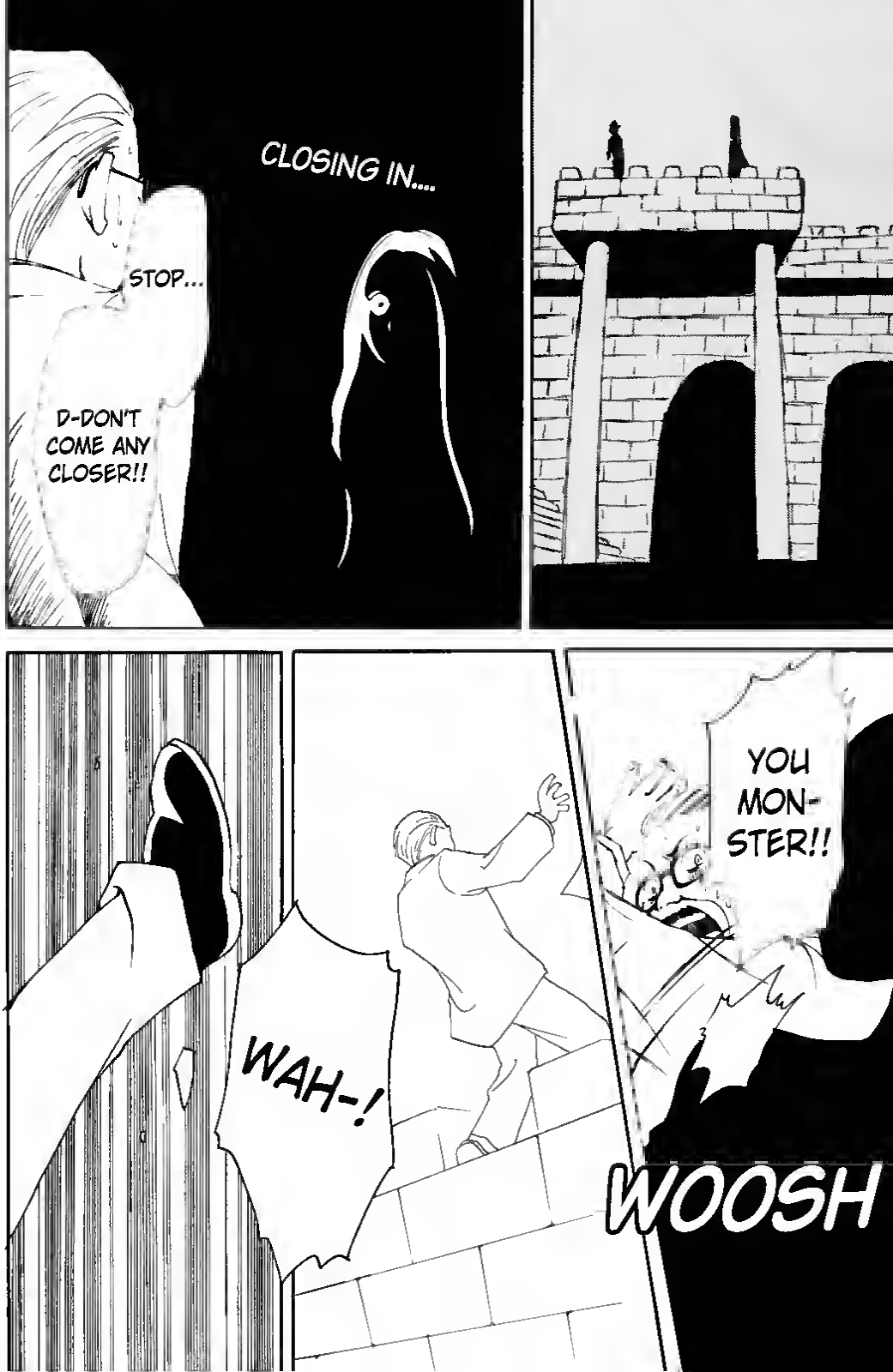

YET... SINCE LONG AGO, HUMANS HAVE CERTAINLY ENJOYED THE THEATER...
WHAT HORRIBLE THINGS ARE YOU SAYING ABOUT REIKO-SAN!? I SHALL EXORCISE THESE EVIL THOUGHTS FROM YOUR MINDS!!
IT IS YOU WHO NEEDS THAT..

WHAT STRANGE CREATURES THESE HUMANS BE....
HEH HEH
I DON'T SEE ANYTHING! I DON'T SEE ANYTHING!! I DON'T SEE ANYTHING!!!
HE HE HE
DRIP DRIP DRIP

LOKI-SAMA.. IS IT SAFE TO LEAVE MAYURA-SAN LIKE THAT...?
NYA HA HA
FAINT
SHE SEEMS QUITE FIRED UP...
IF REIKO-SAN WAS BEHIND THE EVENT TEN YEARS AGO, THEN YURI-SEMPAI IS IN DANGER...!!
HRMM

HAA...
STEP
カツーン
STEP
カツーン
WHO IN THE WORLD COULD HAVE SENT ME THIS LETTER AND CALLED ME OUT HERE...
I MEAN THE ONLY PERSON WHO COULD HAVE WOULD BE....
HAA..

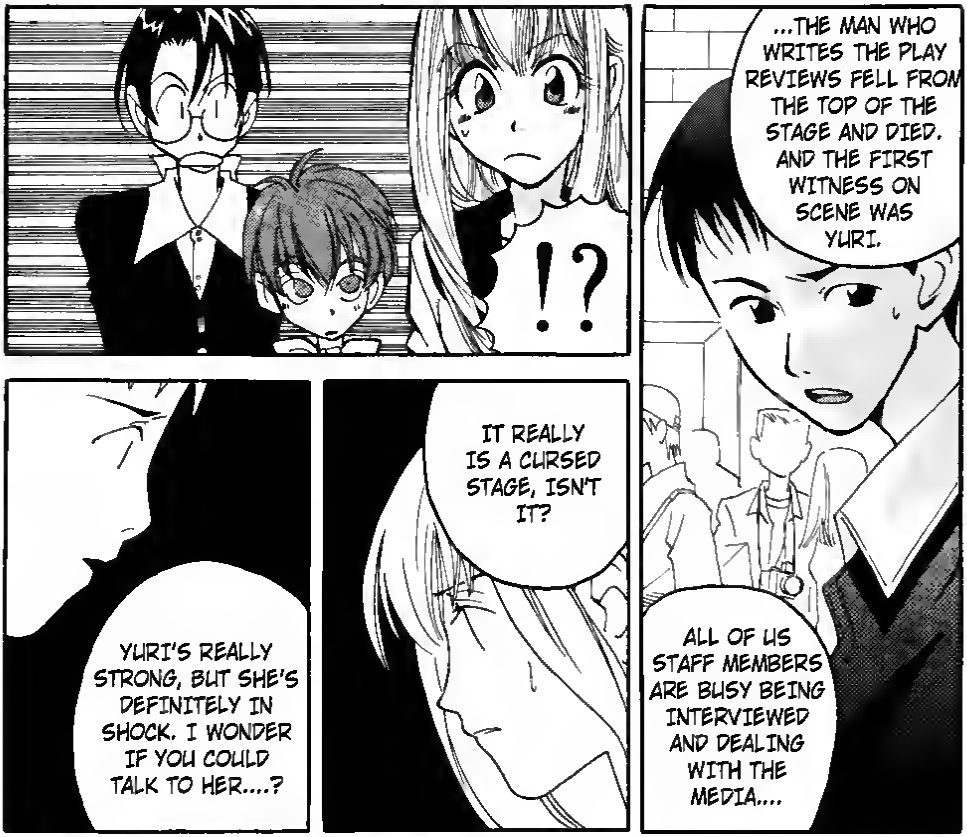
SAORI TSURU-DA...


CLOSING IN....
STOP...
D-DON'T COME ANY CLOSER!!
YOU MON-STER!!
WAH-!
WOOSH

THUD

THE VICTIM IS ONE SHIROU HATAIKE. HE WAS A THEATER REVIEWER...
WE BELIEVE THAT WHILE WALKING ON THE HALF-FINISHED PLAY'S SET, HE FELL OFF THE STAGE.
CAUSE OF DEATH WAS A BLOW TO THE HEAD SUSTAINED DURING A FALL....
IN OTHER WORDS, IT WAS AN ACCIDENT?
AT THIS POINT IN TIME, IT'S PLAUSIBLE TO SAY THAT IT WAS, INSPECTOR NIIYAMA.

HATAIKE CAME TO TOUR THE STAGE FAIRLY OFTEN.
THE GUY WAS ALWAYS PECKING AWAY AT THOSE DAMN NITPICKY REVIEWS OF HIS.
WELL THEN, TOOMINE-SAN. CAN YOU TELL ME WHY MR. HATAIKE WOULD BE ON THE STAGE ALONE?
WHAT, WHAT WHAT!?? WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE...!?
WELL, HE WAS A BIG PUBLIC RELATIONS PILLAR FOR REIKO, SO HE WAS A VERY USEFUL GUY.
DID THESE TWO NOT GET ALONG...?
MAYURA-SAN....
WHAT'S GOING ON!? DON'T TELL ME SOMETHING BAD HAS HAPPENED TO YURI-SEMPAI!
SUGA-WARA-SAN!
THOSE WHO ARE NOT INVOLVED IN THE INVESTIGATION, PLEASE LEAVE.

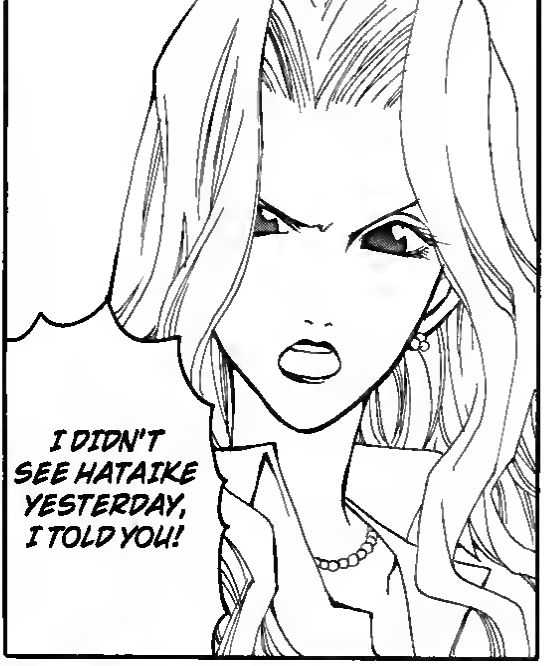

!?
...THE MAN WHO WRITES THE PLAY REVIEWS FELL FROM THE TOP OF THE STAGE AND DIED. AND THE FIRST WITNESS ON SCENE WAS YURI.
ALL OF US STAFF MEMBERS ARE BUSY BEING INTERVIEWED AND DEALING WITH THE MEDIA....
IT REALLY IS A CURSED STAGE, ISN'T IT?
YURI'S REALLY STRONG, BUT SHE'S DEFINITELY IN SHOCK. I WONDER IF YOU COULD TALK TO HER....?

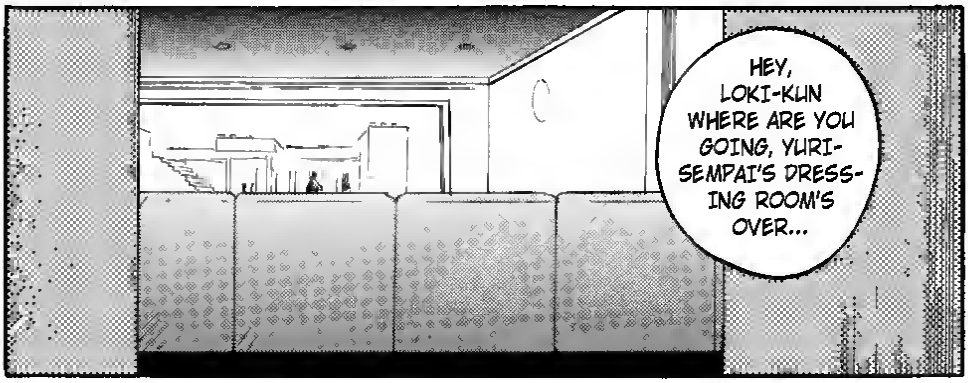
STORM
STORM
IT SEEMS SOMETHING QUITE SERIOUS IS AFOOT.
HMM

I TOLD YOU I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE WHOLE SITUATION! YOU'RE STARTING TO GET ON MY NERVES!!

TAKE CARE OF HER FOR ME, OKAY?
CLACK

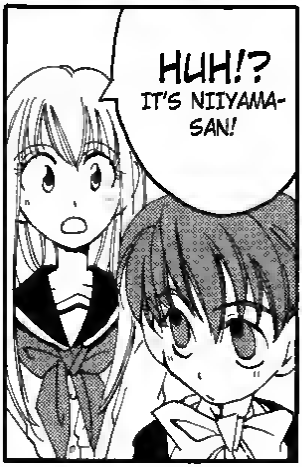
I'D LIKE TO LET MAYURA'S PAPA SEE THAT ONE!
EH HEH HEH HEH HEH
WELL, IT'S NOT THAT I SUSPECT YOU, OF COURSE... BUT... IT'S JUST THE WAY YOU'RE TALKING...
UNGH
WOOF, AS SCARY AS ALWAYS, REIKO-SAN...


I DIDN'T SEE HATAIKE YESTERDAY, I TOLD YOU!


HEY, LOKI-KUN WHERE ARE YOU GOING, YURI-SEMPAI'S DRESSING ROOM'S OVER...

I TOLD YOU TO GET OUT!
OH, I'M FRIENDS WITH YURI-CHAN, WHO'S IN THE PLAY~
THE ANSWER IS NO
FRIEND OR NO FRIEND...

HUH? DAIDOUJI'S DAUGHTER? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
BY WHICH I MEAN... OUTSIDERS AREN'T ALLOWED IN HERE! GET OUTTA HERE!


HUH!?
IT'S NIIYAMA-SAN!

DID YOU FORGET HOW MUCH I HELPED LAST TIME!?
WHA!?
ANY EXTRA PEOPLE ARE A NO-NO!
OH GOD WHY!
EVEN IF I'M A DETECTIVE TOO?
AAH! WHAT THE HELL'S THAT KID DOING OVER THERE!?!?
HMM...
.....
THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW...!
IS THIS THAT FREAKY DETECTIVE THAT DAIDOUJI WAS TALKIN' ABOUT?
TWITCH
TWITCH
LOKI-KUN, THIS IS MY PAPA'S FRIEND, INSPECTOR MASUMI NIIYAMA.

WHO IN THE HELL IS MASUMI-CHAN!!
NICE TO MEET YOU MASUMI-CHAN!!
ARE YOU DONE WITH YOUR CRIME SCENE YET?
WE MAY BE DONE, BUT STILL ONLY PEOPLE WHO ARE INVOLVED ARE ALLOWED IN HERE!
WE HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH INFORMATION TO SAY FOR SURE, BUT PROBABLY AN ACCIDENT...
WAIT, WHY AM I TELLING YOU ALL THIS!?
SO, WAS HATAIKE'S DEATH AN ACCIDENT OR A MURDER?
THAT'S WHY I TOLD YOU TO GET OUTTA HERE...
AAAAA AAAAA!
!?
FLURMP

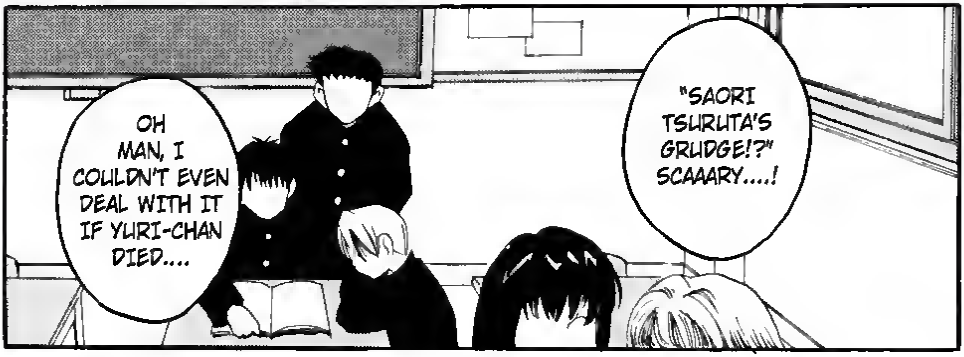
HUNH?
AH!
WAIT JUST A MOMENT...
WHAT IS THAT ON HATAIKE'S FINGER?
INSPECTOR... IS IT OKAY TO BE SHOWING THAT TO A MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC?
NOT TO MENTION A KID
GASP
HRMMM.....
THAT'S JUST SOME TRASH OR SOMETHING, RIGHT?
WHERE, WHERE?
THERE, THERE.
HEHHH... HE GOT ANGRY.
GET THE HELL OUT!!
LATER MASUMI-CHAN

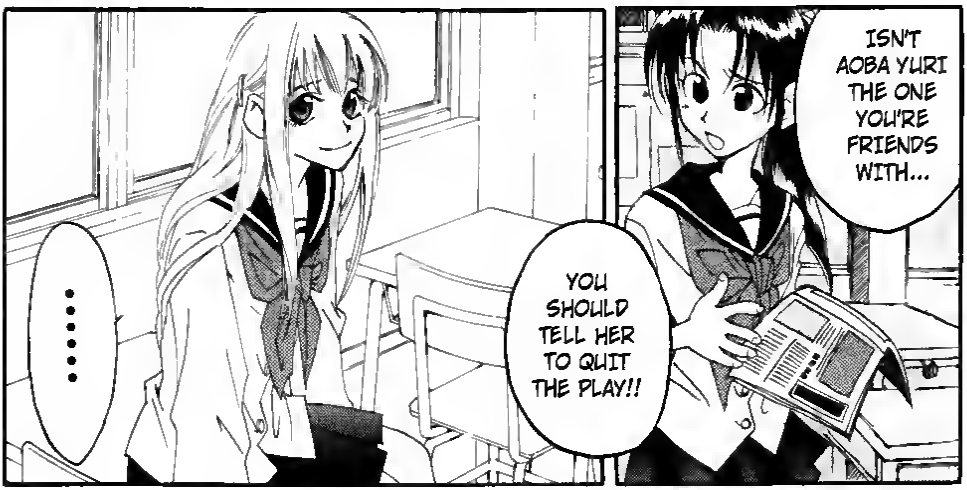
EXCUSE US...
AH...
MAYURA.
YURI-SEMPAI, I'M COMING IN...!
CLICK
YOU REALLY ARE IN SHOCK, AREN'T YOU...
YURI-SEMPAI, YOU LOOK SO PALE...
WHIRL WHIRL
I DO?
HUH?
MR. HATAIKE WAS FIRMLY IN REIKO'S CORNER, I SEE.

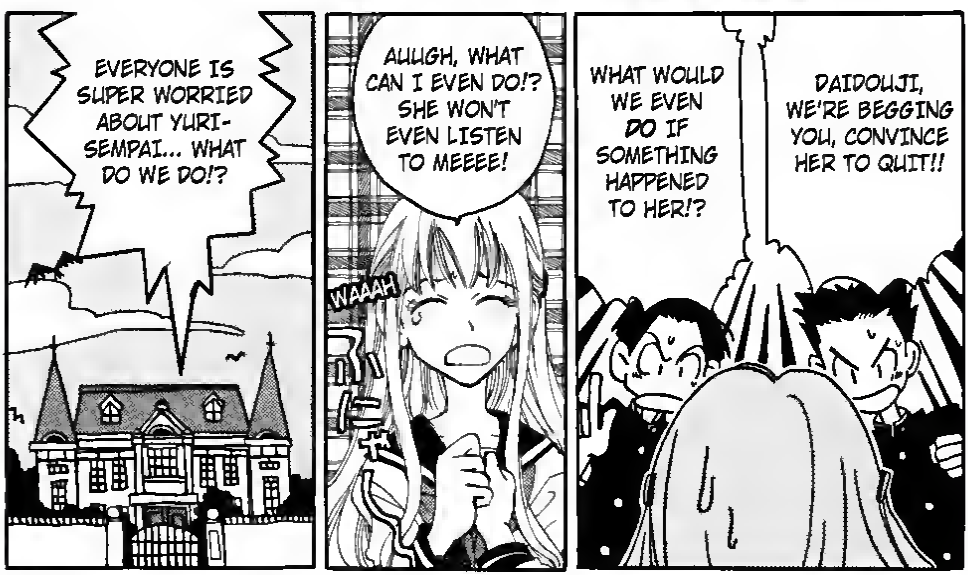
WHOA, HE SAYS SOME HORRIBLE STUFF IN HERE! DID HE HAVE A GRUDGE AGAINST YOU!?
LEMME SEE, LEMME SEE... HMM, HMM....
THAT'S THE REVIE HATAIKE-SAN WROTE FOR THE MAGAZINE HE WORKS FOR.
HE WAS GOING TO COMPLETELY TEAR ME APART.
HE WANTED REIKO-SAN TO GET THE LEAD ROLE...
...YURI-SEMPAI... I'M STARTING TO THINK YOU SHOULD DROP THIS ROLE.
I MEAN, A PERSON REALLY GOT KILLED, AND I HAVE A REALLY BAD FEELING...
I THINK SO, TOO.

I'LL BE OKAY. I WON'T QUIT.
.....
IT'D BE SO AWFUL IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO YOU, YURI.... PLEASE QUIT THE PLAY!
YUU-ICHI-SAN!
AH SHE REALLY WON'T LET YOU WORRY ABOUT HER
WAP
WAP
WAP
BECAUSE THE ONE PERSON IN THE WORLD THAT I WANT TO SEE IS HERE, YOU KNOW!!
WELL, WELL, WE OUGHT TO BE GETTING ALONG, THEN...
I'M A BIT JEALOUS OF THAT CUTE PAIR.
WELL THEN, HOW ABOUT YOU AND I..!
AHAHAHAHA
THAT'S PRETTY FUNNY!!
DROOP
ドーン

WHAT ARE YOU READING?
THE PLAY THEY'RE PUTTING ON.
PLAP
OHH, LOOK AT WHAT A MESS YOU MADE!!
BE GOOD AND PICK IT ALL UP!
MESSED UP!!
HEY, LOKI-KUN, WE'RE GOING HOME!
IT SEEMS SURPRISINGLY...
FASCINATING...
HEY, DID YOU SEE? THIS MAGAZINE!!
IT'S GOT A STORY CALLED, "YURI AOBA'S CURSED STAGE."
青葉ユリ
呪われた舞台


"SAORI TSURUTA'S GRUDGE!?" SCAAARY....!
OH MAN, I COULDN'T EVEN DEAL WITH IT IF YURI-CHAN DIED....

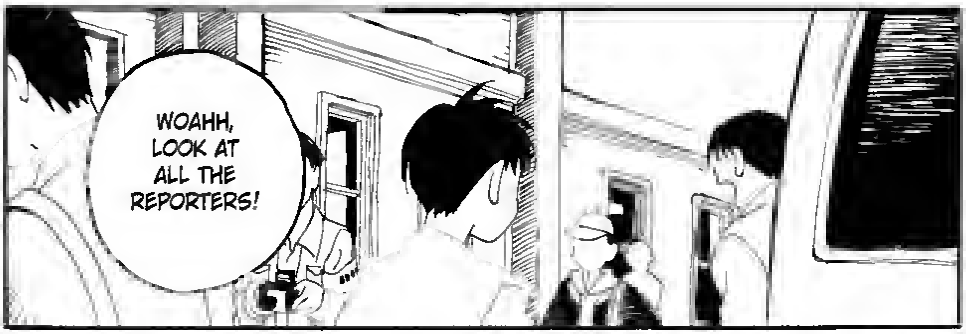

ISN'T AOBA YURI THE ONE YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH...
YOU SHOULD TELL HER TO QUIT THE PLAY!!
.....

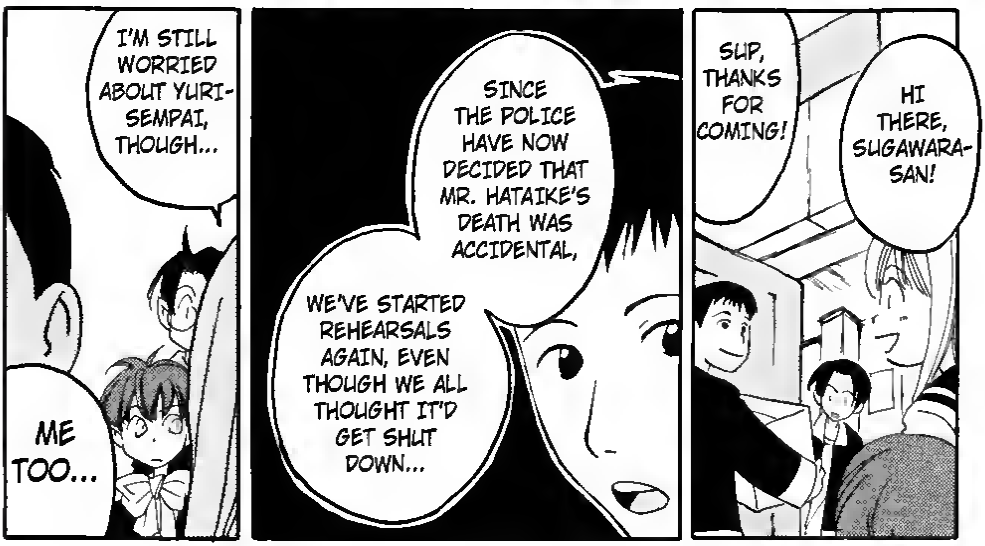

EVERYONE IS SUPER WORRIED ABOUT YURI-SEMPAI... WHAT DO WE DO!?
AUUGH, WHAT CAN I EVEN DO!? SHE WON'T EVEN LISTEN TO MEEEE!
WAAAH
WHAT WOULD WE EVEN DO IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HER!?
DAIDOUJI, WE'RE BEGGING YOU, CONVINCE HER TO QUIT!!

WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING TO MAKE YURI-SEMPAI QUIT THE PLAY!
.....
AGH
AGH
IS IT REIKO KARYUUIN'S OBSESSION? OR SAORI TSURUTA'S GRUDGE?
AND WHAT THE HECK DOES THAT DEMON LORD MOLOCH HAVE TO DO WITH IT...?
PACE
PACE
IT'S ABSOLUTELY FREAKY, I MEAN TWO PEOPLE HAVE DIED 'COS OF THIS PLAY IN TEN YEARS!?
AAAUGH IT SUCKS! NOW I KNOW WHY THEY CALL IT "THE CURSED STAGE!"
IT'S NOT A CURSE.

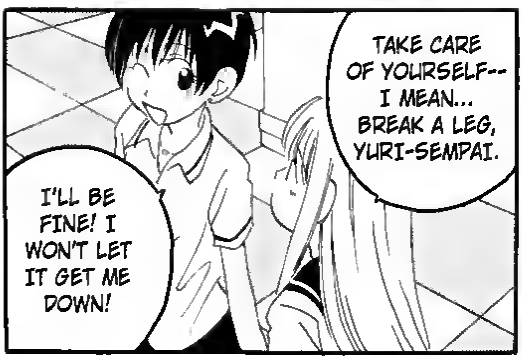
HEE HEE HEE
くすくす
WHILE MASUMI-CHAN WASN'T LOOKING, I FOUND THIS THING JUST LAYING AROUND...
SO, I TOOK IT.
YOU SOUND LIKE YOU FIGURED SOMETHING OUT....
mdock
MAYBE A THREAT LETTER? BUT IF SO, WHERE'S THE LETTER IT FELL FROM...?
ANOTHER THREAT LETTER !?!?
THERE'S EVIDENCE ON THE BACK THAT IT PEELED OFF SOMETHING.
HUH?
YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO JUST TAKE STUFF AWAY LIKE THAT, ARE YOU??
BUT HE SAID THAT THE INVESTIGATION WAS OVER...
PERHAPS... THOUGH THAT BIT OF PAPER HAS YELLOWED, IT SEEMS FAR OLDER THAN THE ONE SENT TO YURI-CHAN.
CREAK CREAK
SO... THE LETTER THAT YURI-SEMPAI GOT WAS MADE BY MR. HATAIKE?
IT WASN'T REIKO-SAN!?

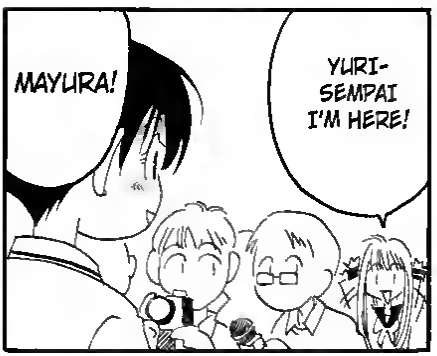
BRRING
BRRING
YES HELLO?
AH, HI YURI-SEMPAI! REHEARSALS START AGAIN TOMORROW?
IS IT THE DRESS REHEARSAL? OOOH, THEN I'M DEFINITELY COMING!!
BEEP
.....

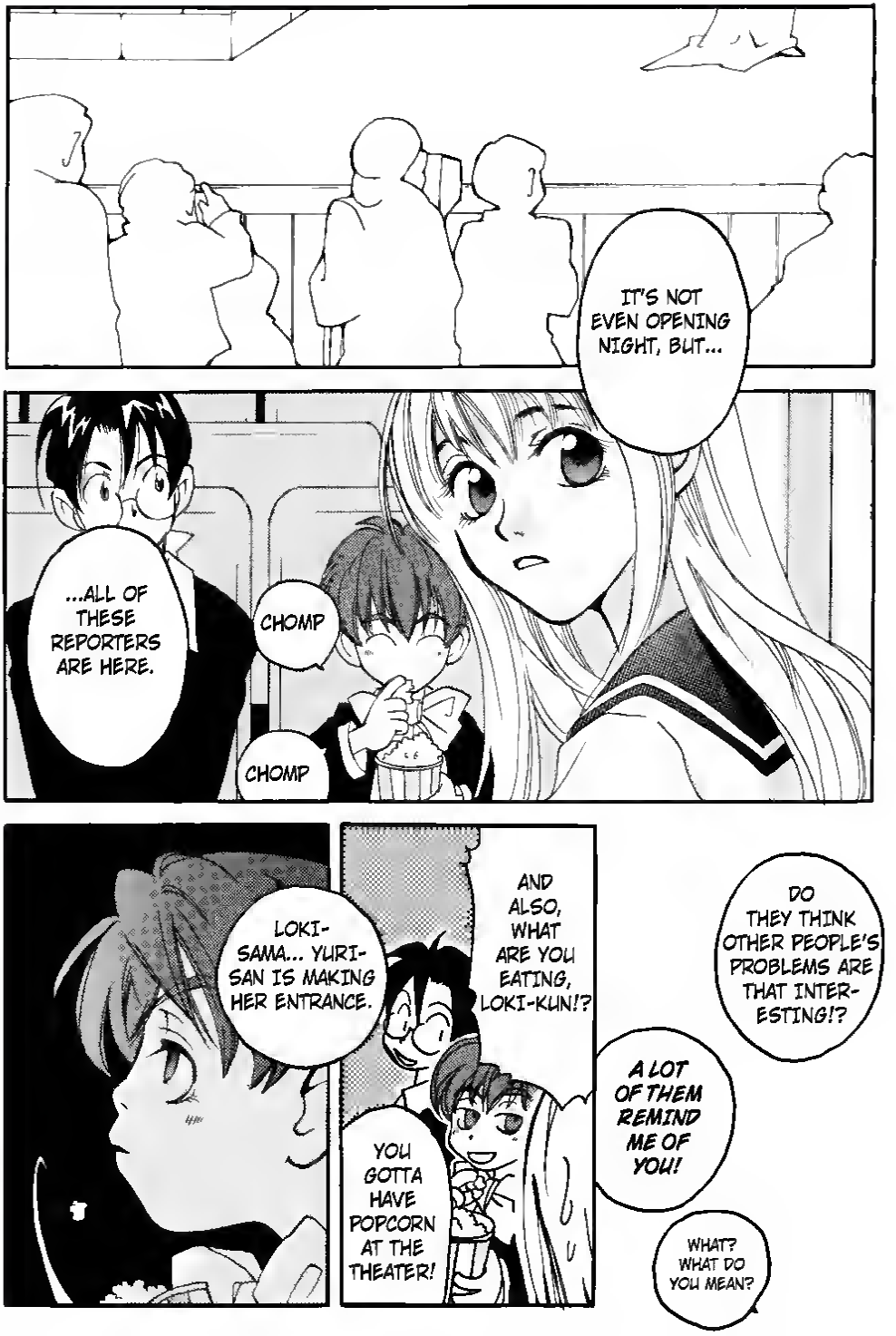

WOAHH, LOOK AT ALL THE REPORTERS!


I'M STILL WORRIED ABOUT YURI-SEMPAI, THOUGH...
ME TOO...
SINCE THE POLICE HAVE NOW DECIDED THAT MR. HATAIKE'S DEATH WAS ACCIDENTAL,
WE'VE STARTED REHEARSALS AGAIN, EVEN THOUGH WE ALL THOUGHT IT'D GET SHUT DOWN...
SUP, THANKS FOR COMING!
HI THERE, SUGAWARA-SAN!

CURSES?
I DON'T BELIEVE IN 'EM!
I'M NOT GONNA BEND TO THE PRESSURE AND WE'RE GOING TO PUT TOGETHER A GREAT SHOW!


TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF-- I MEAN... BREAK A LEG, YURI-SEMPAI.
I'LL BE FINE! I WON'T LET IT GET ME DOWN!


MAYURA!
YURI-SEMPAI I'M HERE!

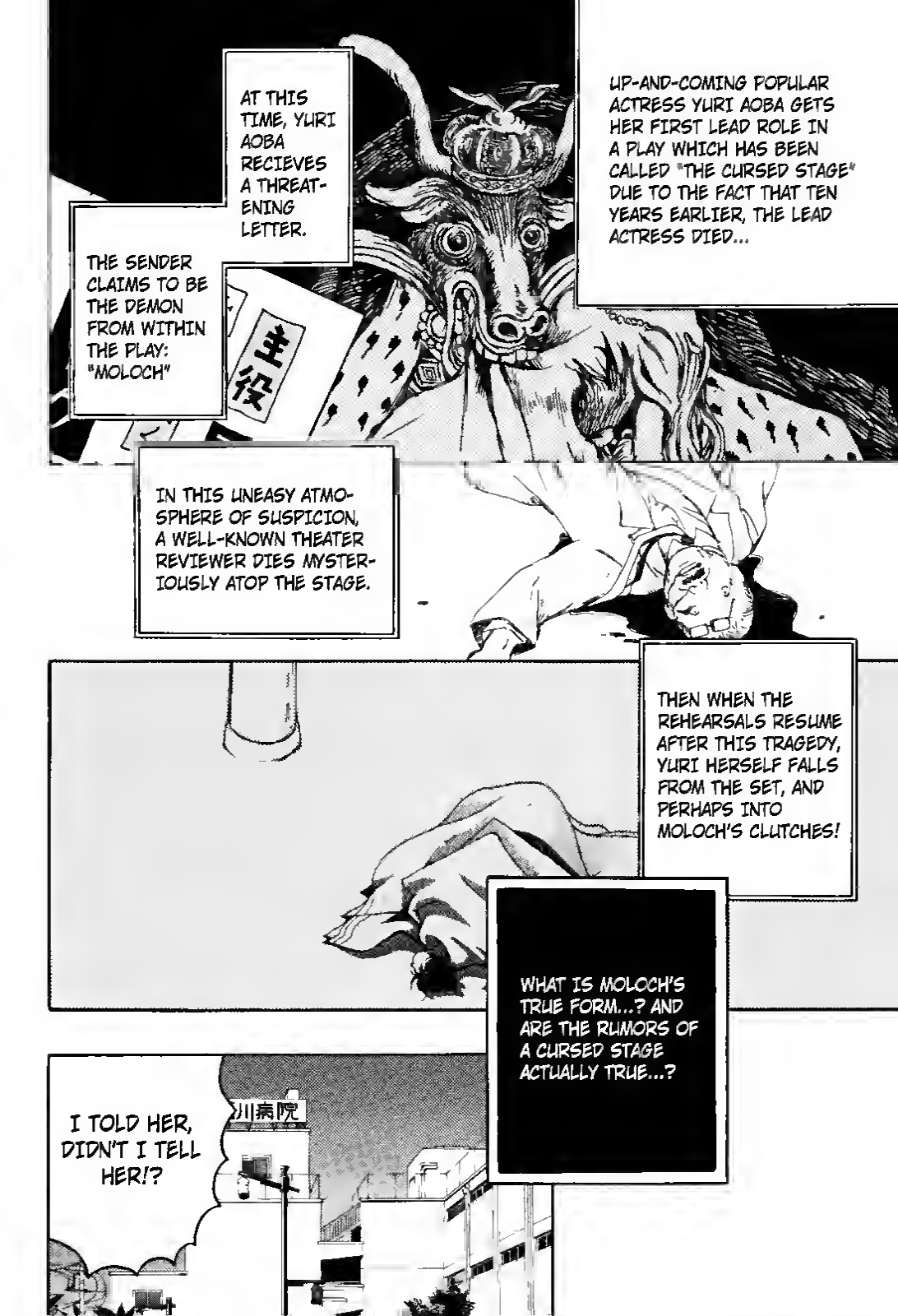

IT'S NOT EVEN OPENING NIGHT, BUT...
...ALL OF THESE REPORTERS ARE HERE.
CHOMP
CHOMP
LOKI-SAMA... YURI-SAN IS MAKING HER ENTRANCE.
AND ALSO, WHAT ARE YOU EATING, LOKI-KUN!?
YOU GOTTA HAVE POPCORN AT THE THEATER!
DO THEY THINK OTHER PEOPLE'S PROBLEMS ARE THAT INTER-ESTING!?
A LOT OF THEM REMIND ME OF YOU!
WHAT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

WOW. YURI-CHAN LOOKS AMAZING!!
KASHK
OW-
!

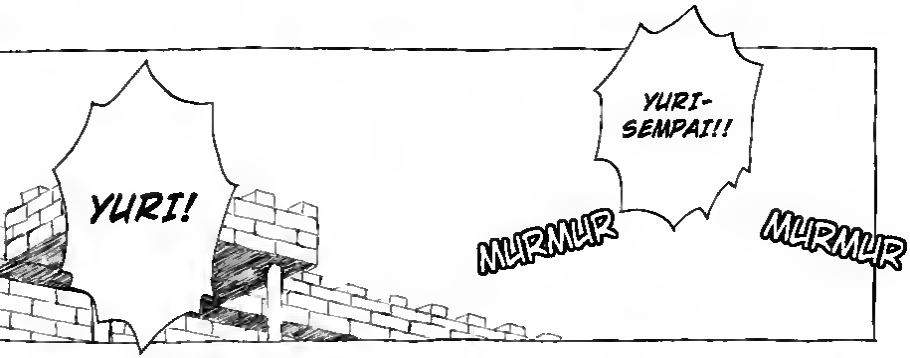
O...OH NO... WHAT THE...?
SLIP
AA..!

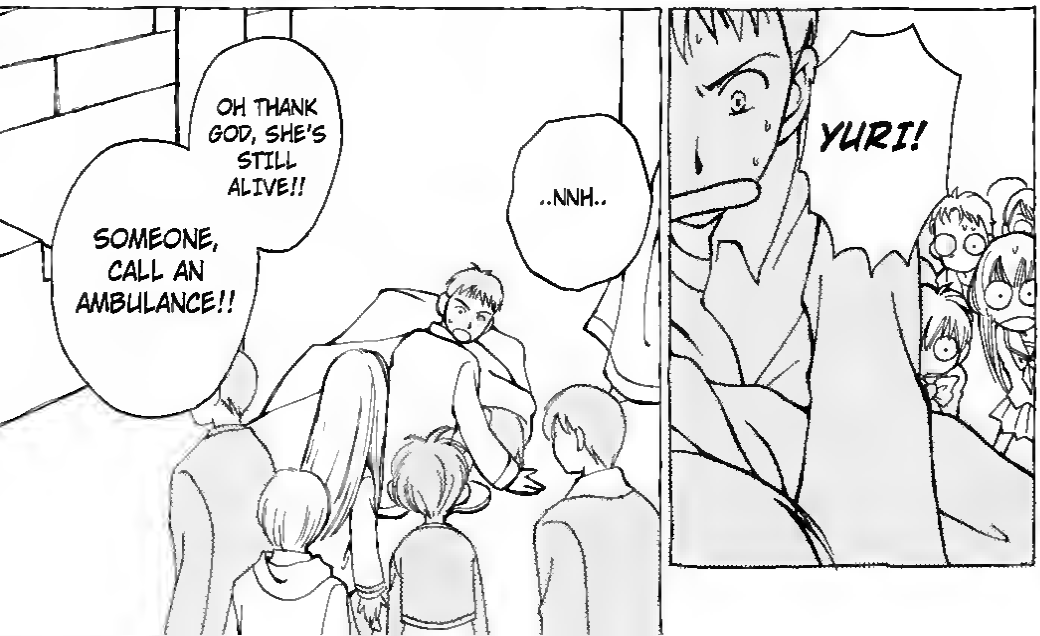
YURI-SEM-PAI!!!!!
MUTTER
MUTTER
MUTTER

NIGHT 3
THE CURSED STAGE (ACT TWO)

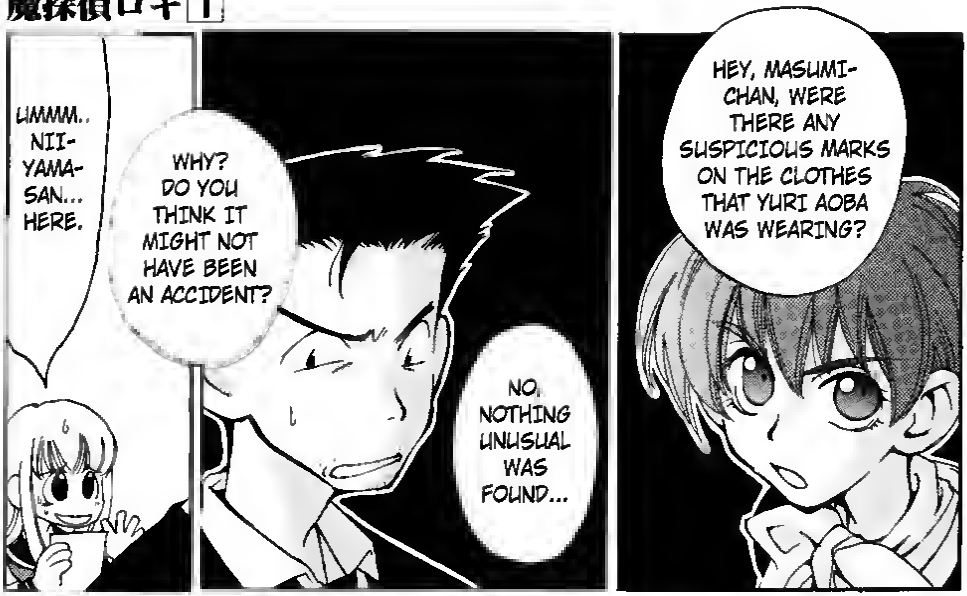

UP-AND-COMING POPULAR ACTRESS YURI AOBA GETS HER FIRST LEAD ROLE IN A PLAY WHICH HAS BEEN CALLED "THE CURSED STAGE" DUE TO THE FACT THAT TEN YEARS EARLIER, THE LEAD ACTRESS DIED...
AT THIS TIME, YURI AOBA RECIEVES A THREATENING LETTER.
THE SENDER CLAIMS TO BE THE DEMON FROM WITHIN THE PLAY: "MOLOCH"
IN THIS UNEASY ATMOSPHERE OF SUSPICION, A WELL-KNOWN THEATER REVIEWER DIES MYSTERIOUSLY ATOP THE STAGE.
THEN WHEN THE REHEARSALS RESUME AFTER THIS TRAGEDY, YURI HERSELF FALLS FROM THE SET, AND PERHAPS INTO MOLOCH'S CLUTCHES!
WHAT IS MOLOCH'S TRUE FORM...? AND ARE THE RUMORS OF A CURSED STAGE ACTUALLY TRUE...?
I TOLD HER, DIDN'T I TELL HER!?
川病院

.....
PLEASE, GOD, YOU HAVE TO SAVE YURI-SEMPAI! PLEASE!
I CAN'T EVEN BELIEVE THIS...

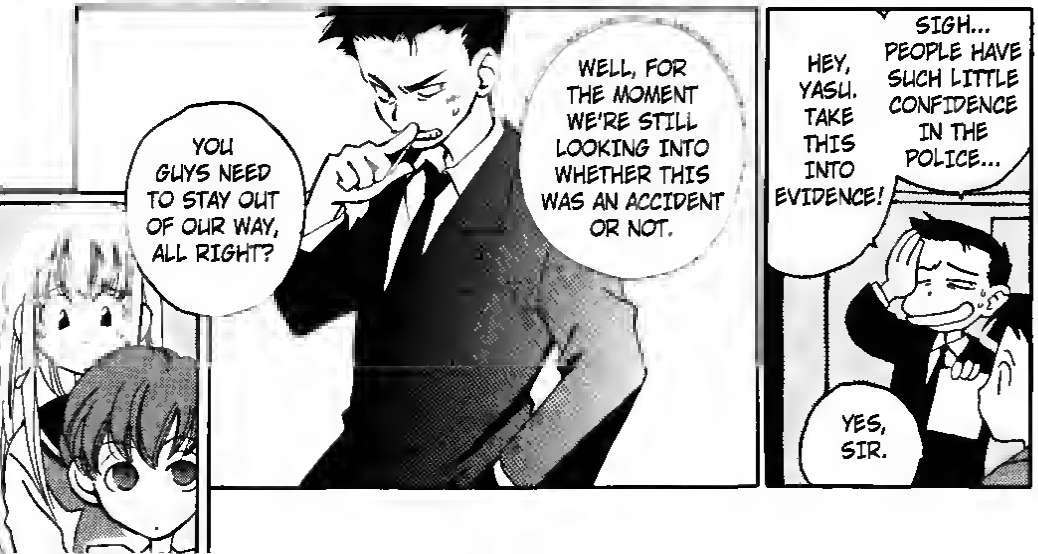

YURI!
YURI-SEMPAI!!
MURMUR
MURMUR

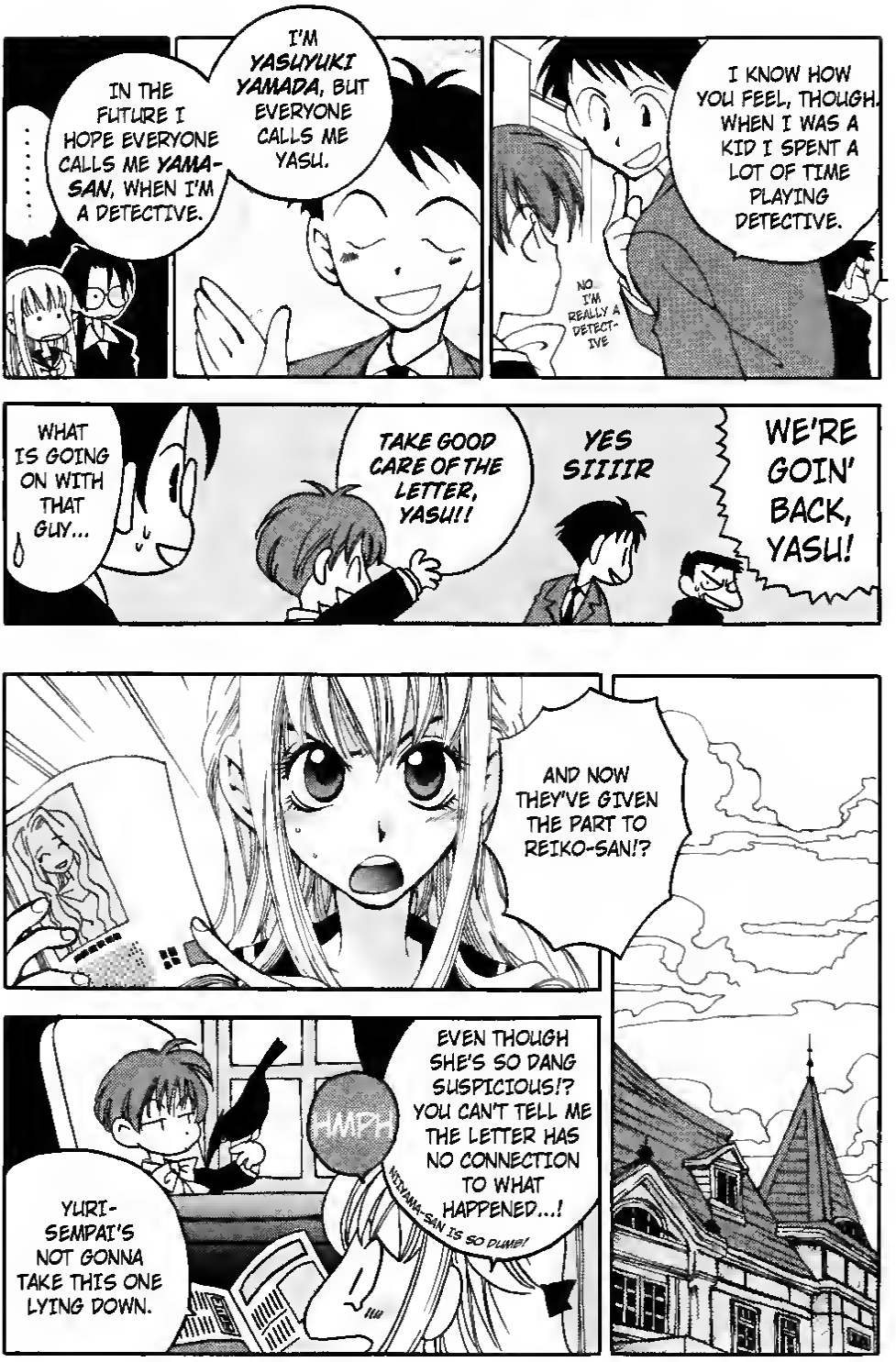

OH THANK GOD, SHE'S STILL ALIVE!!
SOMEONE, CALL AN AMBULANCE!!
..NNH..
YURI!

...JUST BEFORE SHE FELL, YURI-CHAN LOOKED QUITE SURPRISED, DIDN'T SHE...?
HMMM...
NIIYAMA-SAN!
SHE'S GOT GOOD LUCK...
ON THE WHOLE, SHE'S DOING JUST FINE. SHE FELL FROM THE SAME HEIGHT AS HATAIKE-SAN, SO THE FACT THAT SHE'S ALL RIGHT IS ALMOST MIRACULOUS!
SHE'S GOTTA HAVE ABSOLUTE PEACE AND QUIET FOR A WHILE, SO I WON'T BE ABLE TO INTERROGATE HER YET.
WHAT'S YURI-SEMPAI'S CONDITION!?
HUHH, THAT STAGE IS PRETTY DANGEROUS...
AH
MASUMI-CHAN.

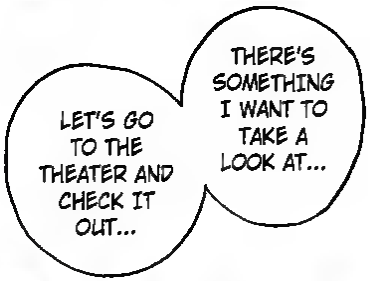

UMMM.. NII-YAMA-SAN... HERE.
WHY? DO YOU THINK IT MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN AN ACCIDENT?
NO, NOTHING UNUSUAL WAS FOUND...
HEY, MASUMI-CHAN, WERE THERE ANY SUSPICIOUS MARKS ON THE CLOTHES THAT YURI AOBA WAS WEARING?

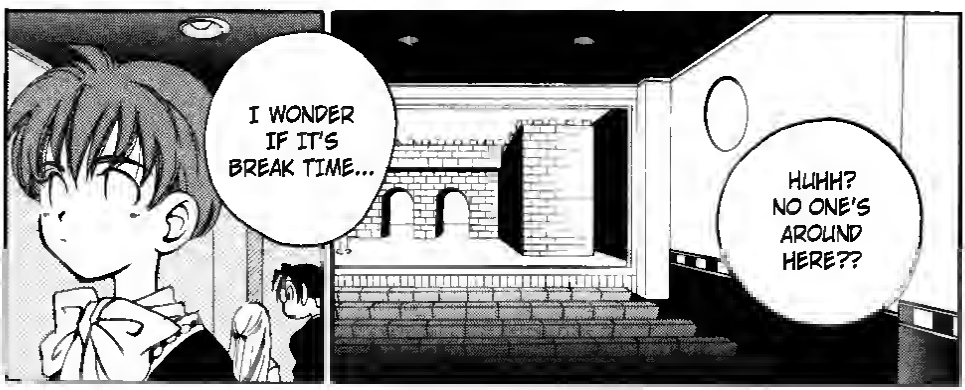
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO EARLIER !?!?
WWHUT!! YURI AOBA RECIEVED A THREAT LETTER....?!


YOU GUYS NEED TO STAY OUT OF OUR WAY, ALL RIGHT?
WELL, FOR THE MOMENT WE'RE STILL LOOKING INTO WHETHER THIS WAS AN ACCIDENT OR NOT.
HEY, YASU. TAKE THIS INTO EVIDENCE!
SIGH... PEOPLE HAVE SUCH LITTLE CONFIDENCE IN THE POLICE...
YES, SIR.


I'M YASUYUKI YAMADA, BUT EVERYONE CALLS ME YASU.
IN THE FUTURE I HOPE EVERYONE CALLS ME YAMA-SAN, WHEN I'M A DETECTIVE.
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, THOUGH. WHEN I WAS A KID I SPENT A LOT OF TIME PLAYING DETECTIVE.
NO I'M REALLY A DETECT-IVE
WE'RE GOIN' BACK, YASU!
YES SIIIIR
TAKE GOOD CARE OF THE LETTER, YASU!!
WHAT IS GOING ON WITH THAT GUY...
AND NOW THEY'VE GIVEN THE PART TO REIKO-SAN!?
EVEN THOUGH SHE'S SO DANG SUSPICIOUS!? YOU CAN'T TELL ME THE LETTER HAS NO CONNECTION TO WHAT HAPPENED...!
HMPH
NISHIYAMA-SAN IS SO DUMB!
YURI-SEMPAI'S NOT GONNA TAKE THIS ONE LYING DOWN.

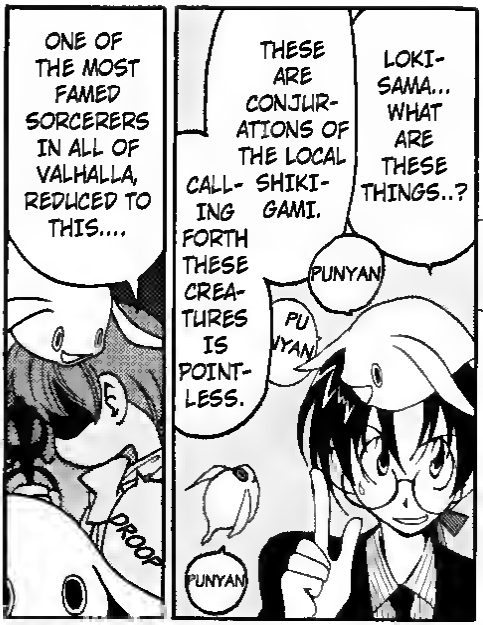
LOKI-SAMA, YOUR YAMINO SUNDAE SPECIAL~
WELL, MAYURA...
IF REIKO-SAN WERE MOLOCH, SHE'D HAVE NO REASON TO WANT MR. HATAIKE DEAD. HE WAS A PART OF HER PLAN.
MMM... ALL OF MY BODILY HUMOURS ARE BEING REPLACED BY DELICIOUS-NESS...
...THEN MAYBE THAT REALLY WAS AN ACCIDENT.
.....

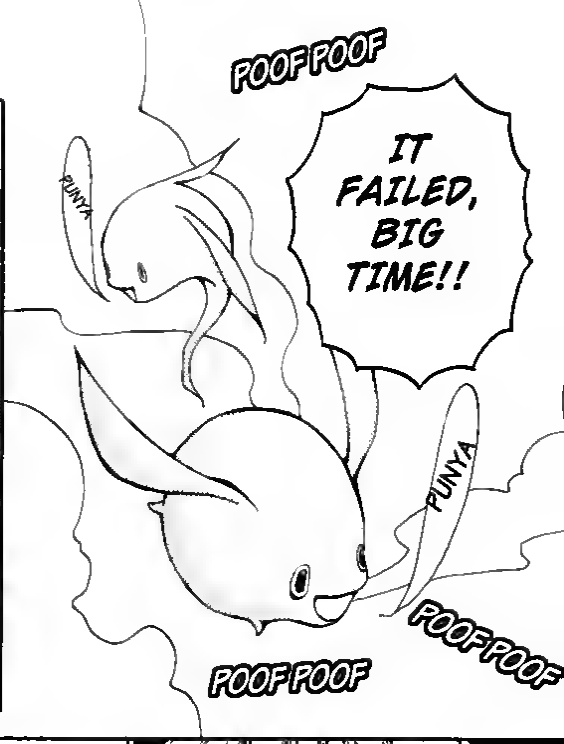

THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO TAKE A LOOK AT...
LET'S GO TO THE THEATER AND CHECK IT OUT...

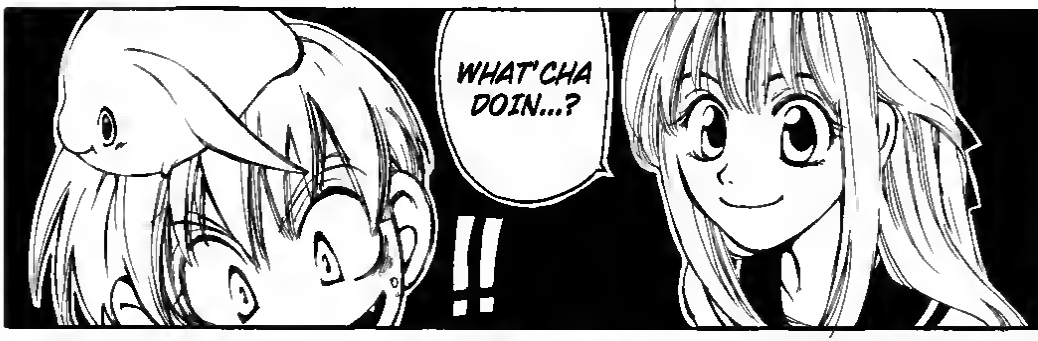

I WONDER IF IT'S BREAK TIME...
HUHH? NO ONE'S AROUND HERE??

OKAY THEN, LET'S GET STARTED RIGHT AWAY.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, LOKI-SAMA?
HERE I GO THEN! SEE YOU LATER!!
WE'RE EXCITED TO SEE WHAT YOU COME UP WITH, BEAUTIFUL YOUNG DETECTIVE!!
HUHHH? ALL ALONE?
CAN YOU FIND THE THEATER STAFF AND ASK THEM ALL ABOUT THE EVENTS OF TEN YEARS AGO?
SO, MAYURA, WE'RE JUST GOING TO BE DOING WHATEVER.
HEHEHE, HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN ABOUT MY GREAT SKILL IN NECROMANCY, YAMINO-KUN?
I THINK I'M GOING TO TRY CALLING BACK THE SPIRIT OF THE DECEASED HUMAN.
SPIRIT?
OH, I SEE....
THAT'S WHY YOU SENT MAYURA-SAN...
M-MYS TER YYYY !!!
STOMP STOMP
JUST THINK, IF SHE SAW SOMETHING LIKE THIS, SHE'D BE STALKING US EVEN MORE THAN SHE ALREADY IS...
SHIVER

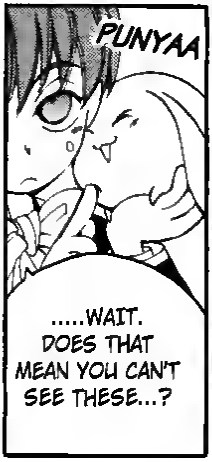
TOK
COME!
RISE FROM YOUR SLEEP AND APPEAR BEFORE ME.
I SUMMON THEE, SPIRIT OF THE DEAD
FWOOOSH
OW OW OW...
SURE, SURE, BUT DID IT WORK!?
OH NOOO, BE MORE CAREFUL!! YOUR MAGIC IS LESS POWERFUL ON THIS PLANE...
ALIGH! LOKI-SAMA!!
BANG!!
OOF!
WAGH!
POP


ONE OF THE MOST FAMED SORCERERS IN ALL OF VALHALLA, REDUCED TO THIS....
DROOP
LOKI-SAMA... WHAT ARE THESE THINGS..?
THESE ARE CONJURATIONS OF THE LOCAL SHIKIGAMI.
CALLING FORTH THESE CREATURES IS POINTLESS.
PUNYAN
PU NYAN
PUNYAN


POOF POOF
IT FAILED, BIG TIME!!
PUNYA
PUNYA
POOF POOF
POOF POOF


WHAT'CHA DOIN...?
!!

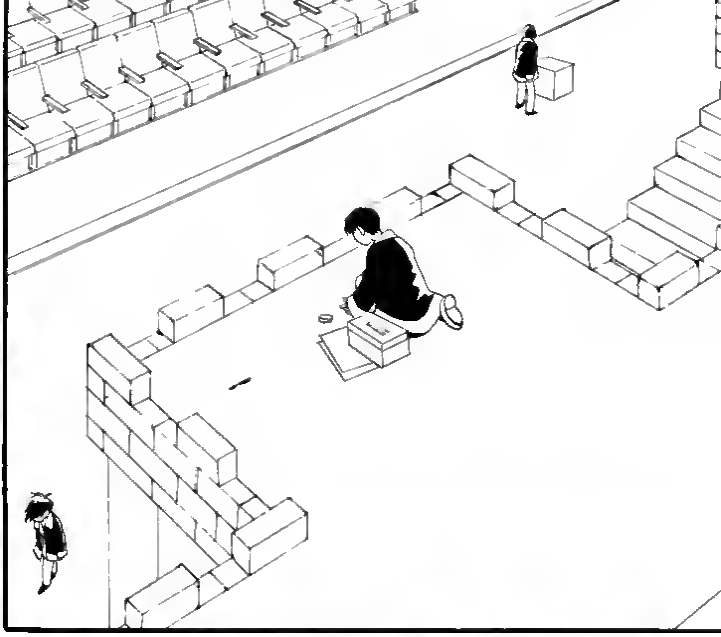
HAHAHA, MAYURA HAS ABSOLUTELY NO SPIRITUAL POWER, THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF HER PAPA.
HUH? SEE WHAT?
HEH
PUNYAA

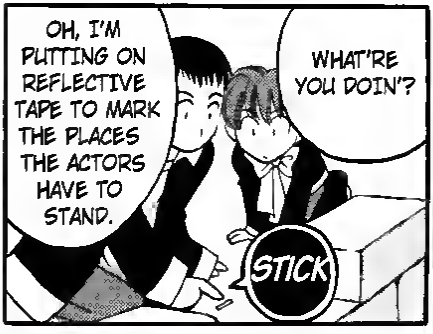

PUNYAA
.....WAIT. DOES THAT MEAN YOU CAN'T SEE THESE...?

MA-MA-MAYURA!!!!
SHOCKED AT HOW QUICK I AM? IT'S 'COS I'M SUCH A GREAT DETECTIVE!

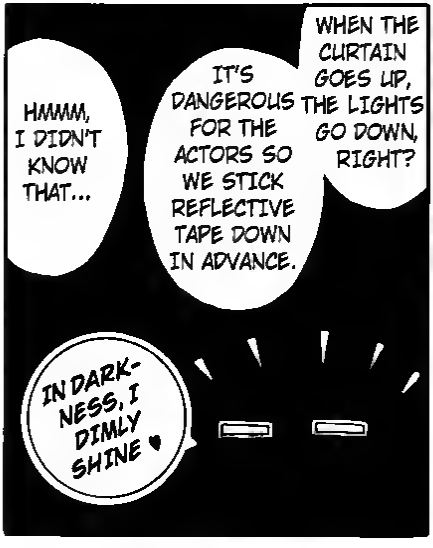
WHAT HAPPENED TO THE KID AFTER THAT?
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING BEYOND THAAAAT!!
BUT A SECURITY GUY WHO'S BEEN HERE SINCE TEN YEARS AGO SAID...
...THAT THERE WAS A CRYING KID NEXT TO SAORI WHEN SHE KILLED HERSELF!
!
NEW INFO!
APPARENTLY SAORI TSURUTA'S BIG SCANDAL WAS AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD...
OH HEY MAYURA-SAN AND THE OTHERS... IT'S DANGEROUS HERE, YOU KNOW
MARCH
MARCH
HEY HEY, WHAT'RE YOU ALL DOING HERE!?
CHATTER
OH, SURE..
HEY, SUGAWARA! STOP TALKING TO THOSE GUYS!
WE NEED TO MOVE THIS LIGHTING RIG! COME HELP ME!
CHATTER
CHATTER
TOTALLY IN THE WAY
YEAH, WELL, IT'S BETTER THAN HAVING TO SCRAP THE WHOLE THING...
THE POLICE JUST CAME AND TOLD ALL OF THE STAFF MEMBERS TO OVERHAUL THE DANGEROUS PARTS OF THE SET....

YURI-CHAN WAS SURE HURT, HUH? BET YOU WERE WORRIED, SUGAWARA-SAN...
WHA-!
POP




OH, I'M PUTTING ON REFLECTIVE TAPE TO MARK THE PLACES THE ACTORS HAVE TO STAND.
WHAT'RE YOU DOIN'?
STICK

YEAH... BUT I'M RELIEVED SHE ENDED UP ALL RIGHT. FOR AN HOUR OR SO THERE, I HAD NO IDEA WHAT WAS GOING TO HAPPEN.
I REALLY WANT THIS PLAY TO GO WELL, FOR YURI'S SAKE...

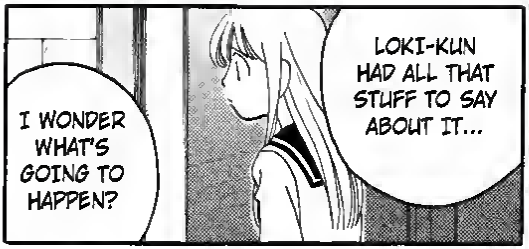

HMMM, I DIDN'T KNOW THAT...
IT'S DANGEROUS FOR THE ACTORS SO WE STICK REFLECTIVE TAPE DOWN IN ADVANCE.
WHEN THE CURTAIN GOES UP, THE LIGHTS GO DOWN, RIGHT?
IN DARK-NESS, I DIMLY SHINE ♥

HE REALLY MUST HAVE BEEN THE ONE...
WHO SENT THE THREAT LETTER TO REIKO-SAN'S RIVAL... I GUESS.
HATAIKE-SAN FELL FROM HERE TO HIS DEATH, SO MUST BE A PRETTY DANGEROUS PLACE.
...WELL, WE TURNED YURI-CHAN'S LETTER IN TO THE POLICE...
OH, YURI'S THREAT LETTER...
WHERE'D YOU SEE SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
WHERE'D YOU GET OFF TO, LOKI-KUN?
SO, YOU ALREADY MADE TOOMINE-SAN MAD, IT'D PROBABLY BE BEST IF YOU GOT BACK DOWN THERE, NOW.
YIIKES
SHOO SHOO
THUNK
WELL, SINCE REIKO'S THE STAR NOW, I'M OFF TO GET HER AUTOGRAPH!
GO

I'M QUITE TIMID, SO I TOO SHALL STAY.
NO WAY, REIKO-SAN IS SUUUPER SCARY SO I'M GONNA PASS ON THIS ONE.
OH?
THEN I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.
NOK
NOK
YOU SEEM QUITE WELL.
OF COURSE I AM. I FINALLY GOT THE PART I'VE BEEN DREAMING OF ALL THESE YEARS.
OH MY, IT'S THE LITTLE DETECTIVE! (TEE HEE) WELCOME!
I DON'T THINK IT'S TOO MUCH TO SAY THAT THIS PLAY IS MY CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT.

YOU LOOK SO YOUNG IN THIS PICTURE, REIKO-SAN.
WHO'S THIS NEXT TO YOU IN THERE...?
OH HO HO HO
WHAT A SMART BOY YOU ARE! OF COURSE I'LL GIVE YOU ONE.
NOW, TELL ME WHAT IT IS YOU CAME FOR.
I JUST WANTED TO GET YOUR AUTO-GRAPH!
FOR SOME REASON LOKI HAS AUTO-GRAPH PAPER
AHHH. THAT'S SAORI TSURUTA.
BACK THEN, WHENEVER WE WERE TOGETHER, THE PRESS ALWAYS TOOK NOTICE AND THERE WERE TONS OF PHOTOS WITH THE TWO OF US.
HERE YOU GO! YOUR AUTO-GRAPH
....LOKI-KUN.
WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND OUT NOW?

YOU SEE, MOLOCH...
...HAS YET TO ATTAIN HIS TRUE SACRIFICE.
WHAT!?
THIS ISN'T OVER YET. MOLOCH STILL REQUIRES A SACRIFICE.
BUT YURI-SEMPAI WAS THE ONE WHO GOT ALL THE THREATS, AND NOW SHE'S QUIT THE PART! WHAT ELSE COULD HAPPEN?

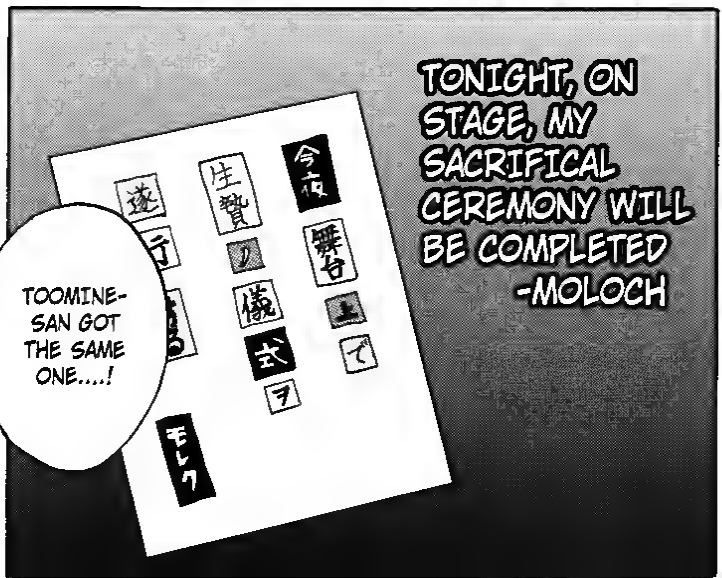

I WONDER WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN?
LOKI-KUN HAD ALL THAT STUFF TO SAY ABOUT IT...

TOMORROW'S FINALLY THE PLAY'S OPENING NIGHT.

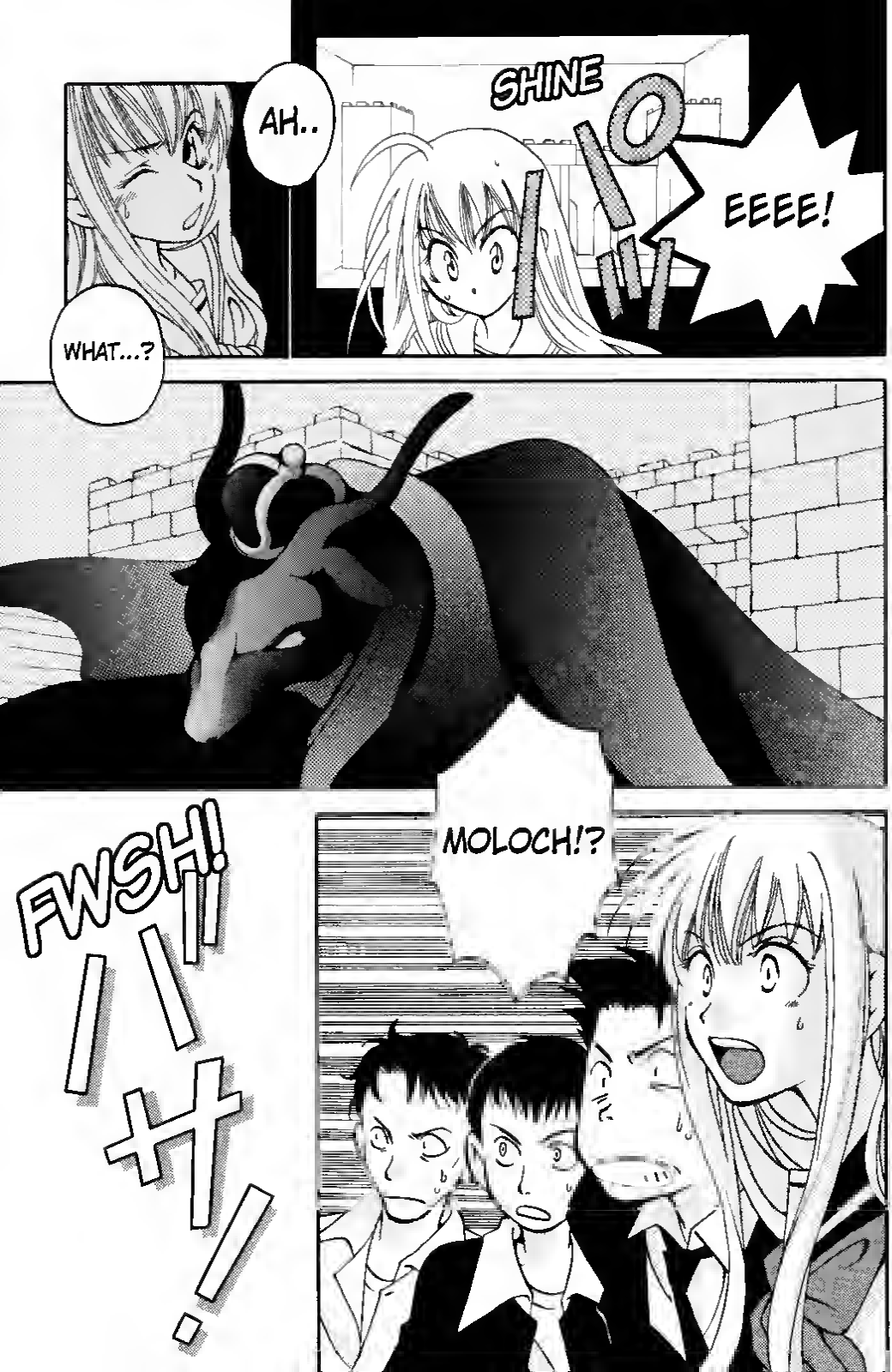
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!! WE JUST GOT THIS THING!!
YIEE

SUGAWARA-SAN, I'M GOING TO GO SEE YURI-SEM-PAI, YOU COM-ING?
MA YU RA-SAN!

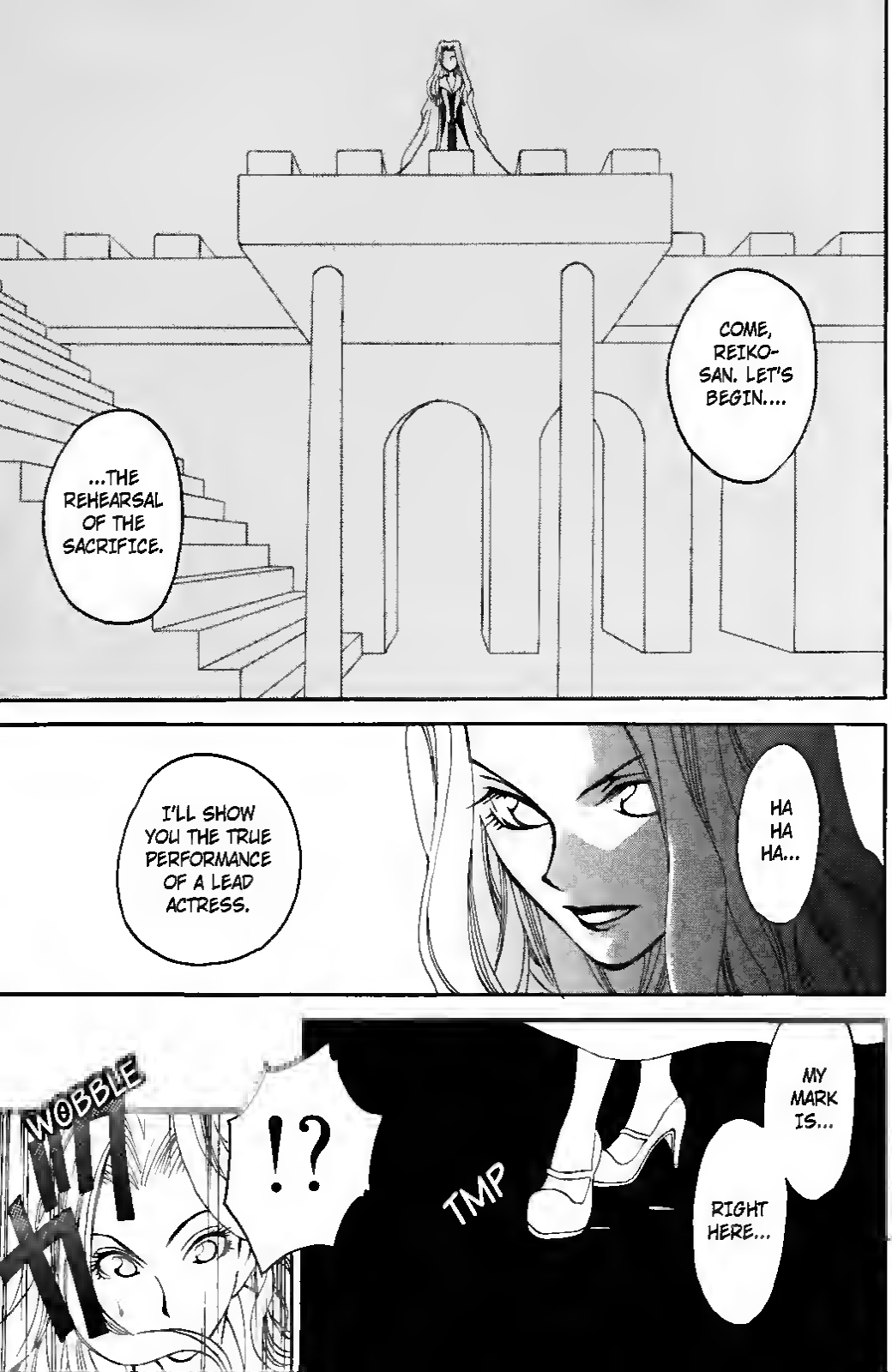
A-ANOTHER THREAT LETTER!?
MY-MYSTERY!


TOMINE-SAN GOT THE SAME ONE....!
今夜 舞台 上 で 生贄 ノ 儀式 ヲ 遂行 モレク
TONIGHT, ON STAGE, MY SACRIFICAL CEREMONY WILL BE COMPLETED -MOLOCH

HOW CAN YOU BE GONE AT A TIME LIKE THIS!?
BANG
BANG
LOKI-KUN!!
BANG
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A DETECTIVE!
SOMETHING IS ABOUT TO START... BUT WHAT...?
SUGA-WARA-SAN!
TOOMINE-SAN!
JEEZ, WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON AROUND HERE..?
I COULDN'T EVEN FIND YASH...
SINCE FOR THE MOMENT WE DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, I BROUGHT THIS POLICE DETECTIVE I KNOW...

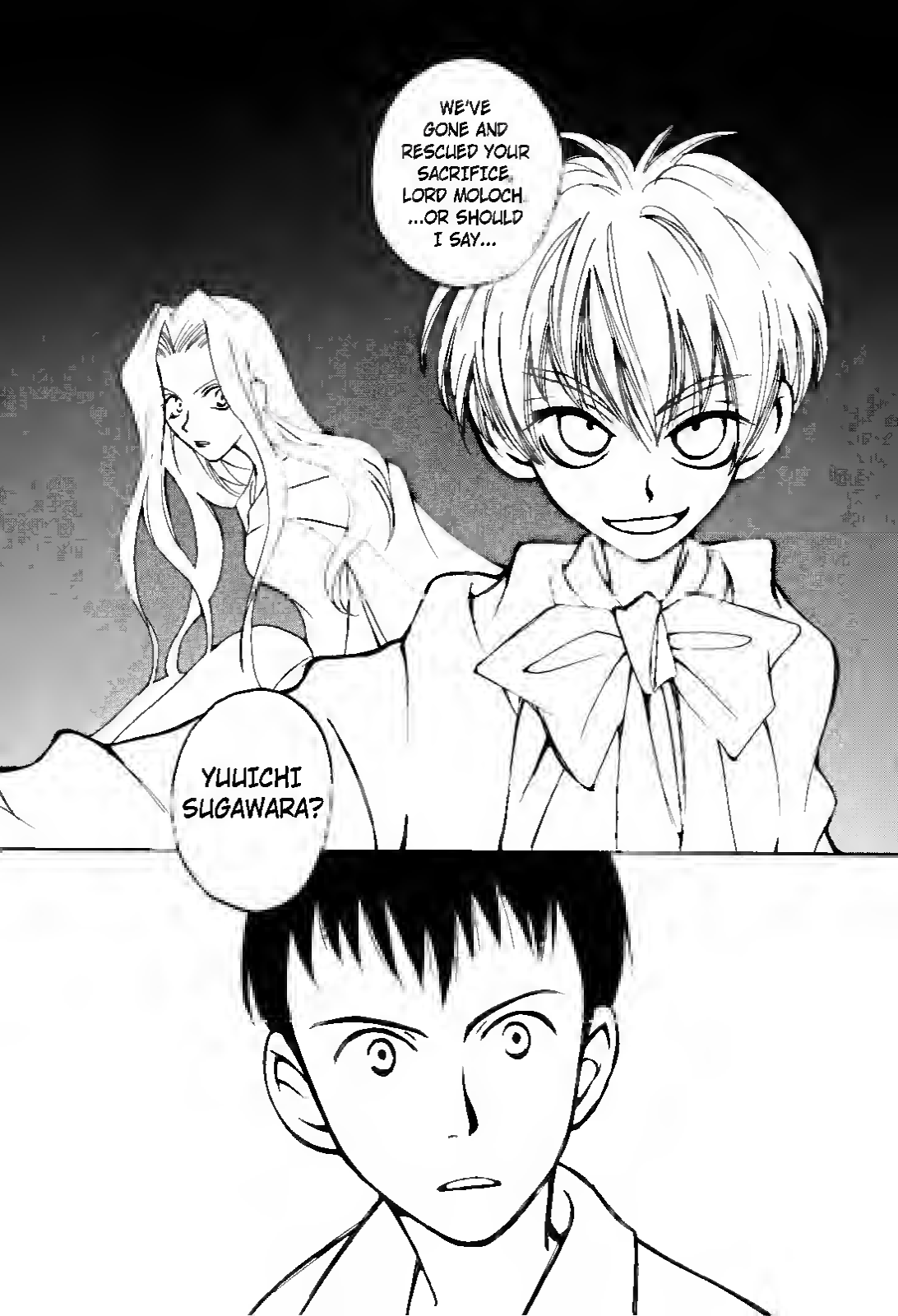

AH..
SHINE
EEEE!
WHAT...?
MOLOCH!?
FWSH!

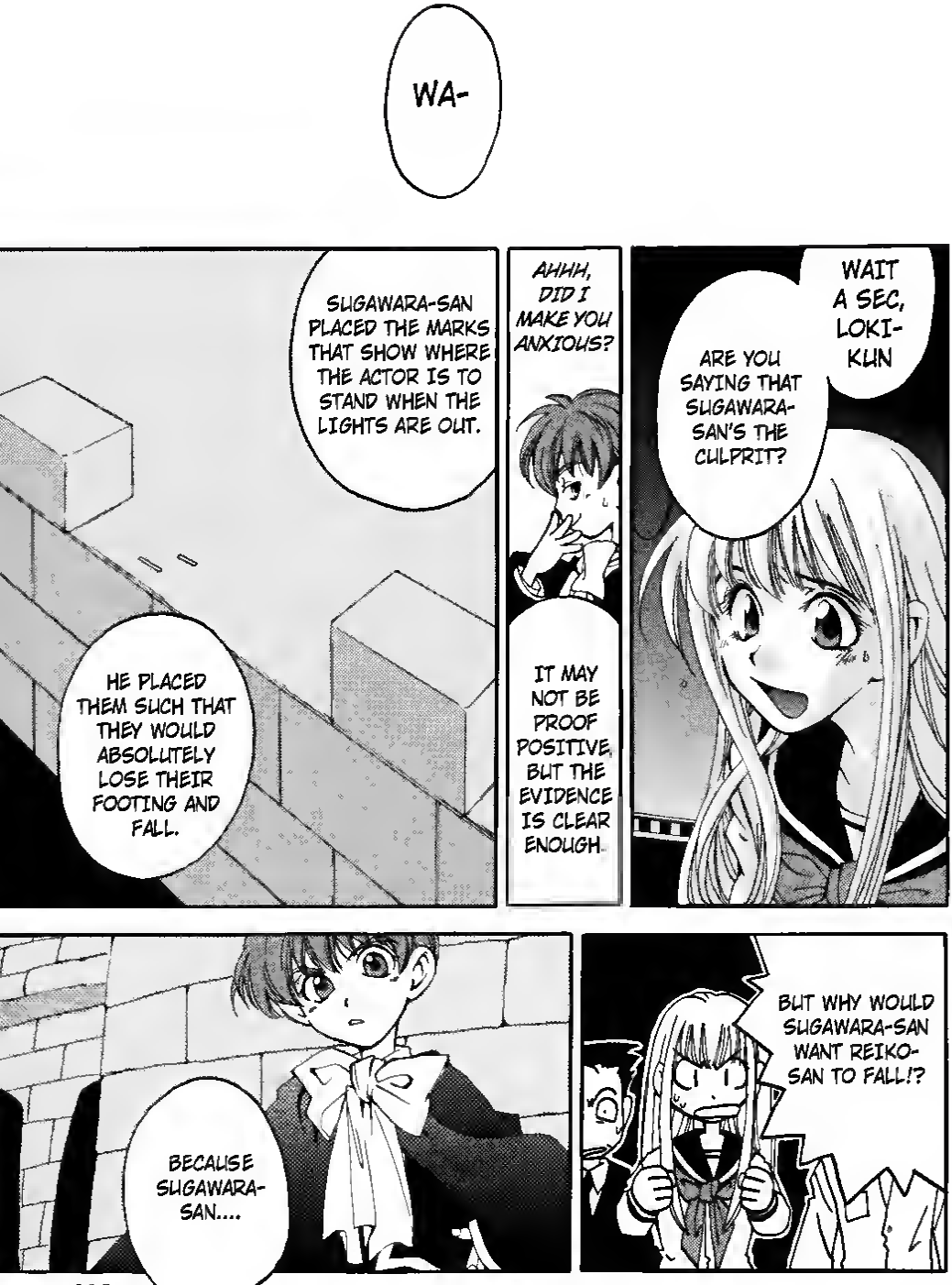
WELCOME TO THE CURSED STAGE.
DIDN'T I TELL YOU, MAYURA?
TONIGHT, ON THIS STAGE...
LOKI-KUN!! WHY...?
YOU SENT THESE THREATENING LETTERS!? THIS WAS ALL YOUR PLAN!? THIS WOULD EVEN BE OUTTA LINE FOR AN ADULT!!
Y-YOU'RE...
...TH-THAT SCARED ME.
BDUMP
MOLOCH MUST RECIEVE HIS FINAL SACRIFICE, BEFORE THIS STORY CAN END.

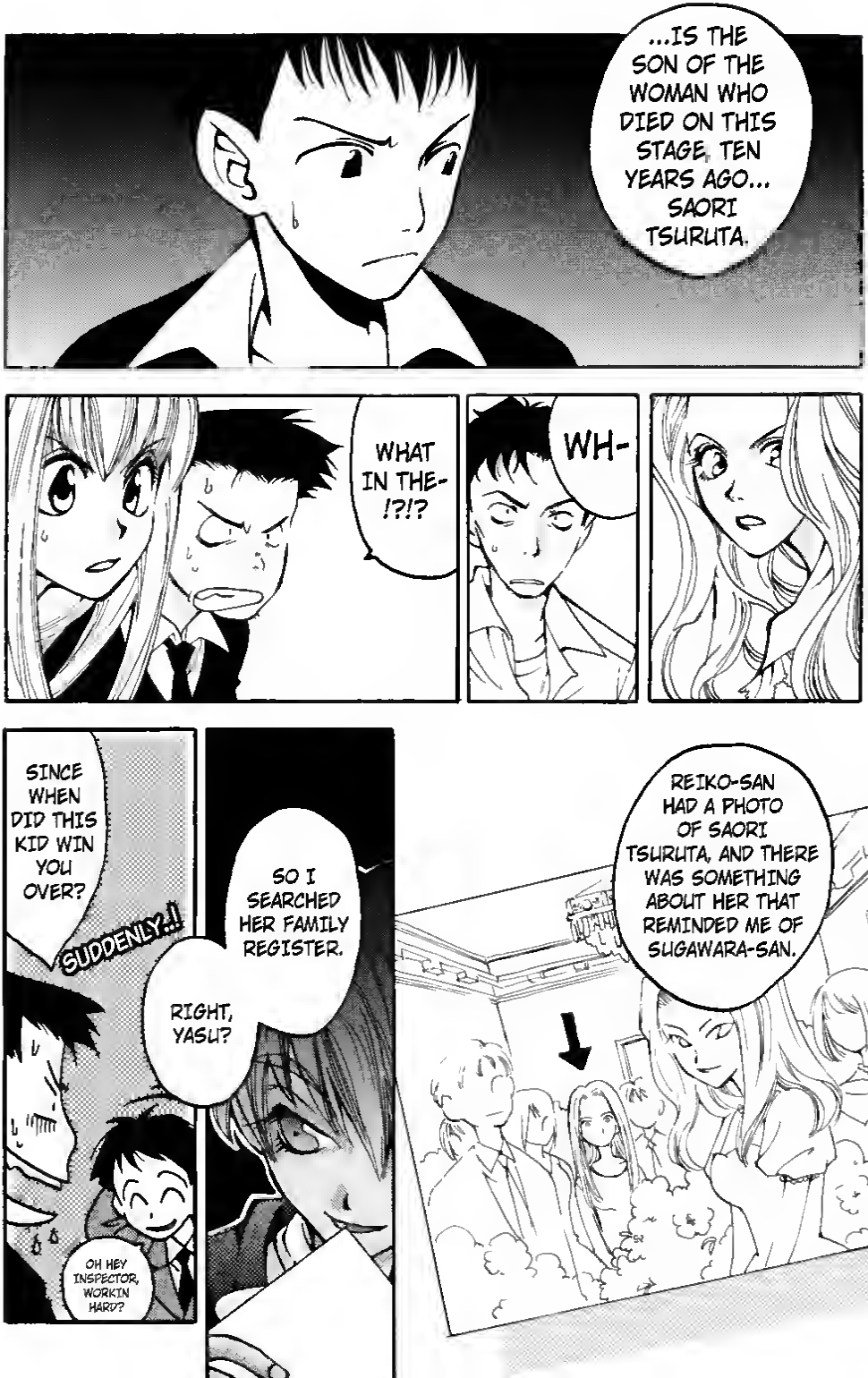

COME, REIKO-SAN. LET'S BEGIN....
...THE REHEARSAL OF THE SACRIFICE.
HA HA HA...
I'LL SHOW YOU THE TRUE PERFORMANCE OF A LEAD ACTRESS.
MY MARK IS...
RIGHT HERE...
TMP
!?
WOBBLE

AAH!
YAMINO-KUN!
WOOSH
AAAAAAA

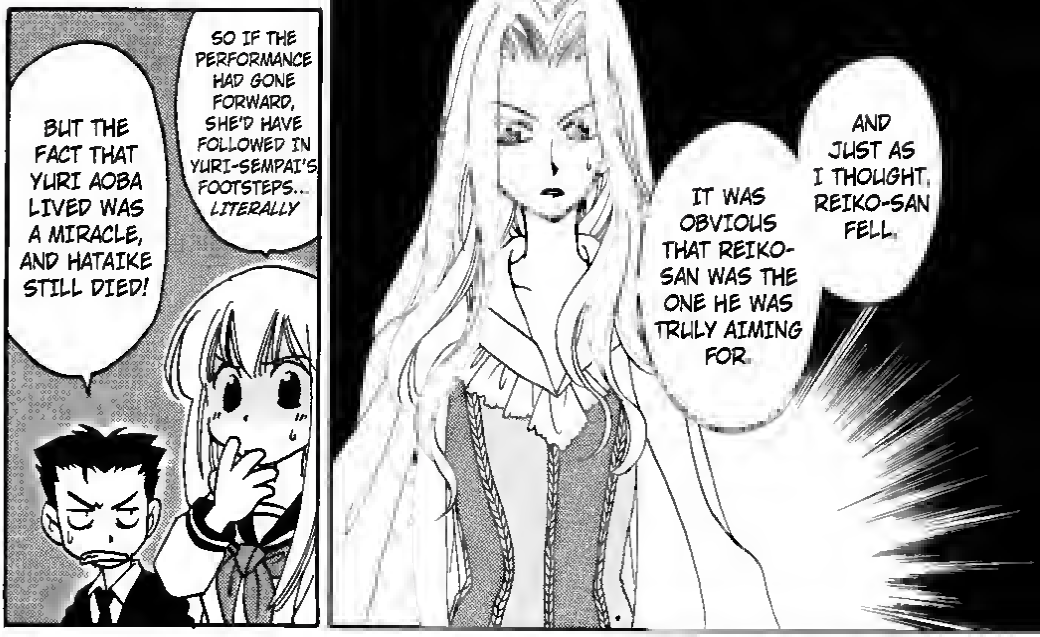
TAP
WELL NOW.
WHAT WILL YOU DO?
SMIRK
JUST IN THE NICK OF TIME, LOKI-SAMA!!
ALWAYS SO CHEERFUL, YAMINO-KUN

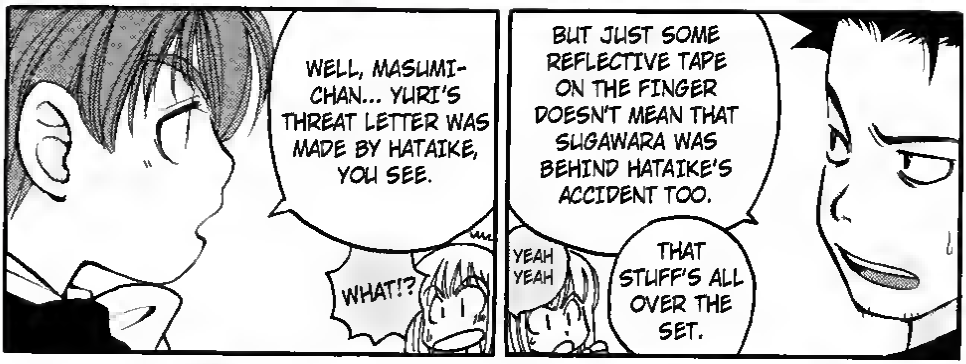

WE'VE GONE AND RESCUED YOUR SACRIFICE, LORD MOLOCH ...OR SHOULD I SAY...
YUUICHI SUGAWARA?


WA-
SUGAWARA-SAN PLACED THE MARKS THAT SHOW WHERE THE ACTOR IS TO STAND WHEN THE LIGHTS ARE OUT.
HE PLACED THEM SUCH THAT THEY WOULD ABSOLUTELY LOSE THEIR FOOTING AND FALL.
AHHH, DID I MAKE YOU ANXIOUS?
IT MAY NOT BE PROOF POSITIVE, BUT THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR ENOUGH.
WAIT A SEC, LOKI-KUN
ARE YOU SAYING THAT SUGAWARA-SAN'S THE CULPRIT?
BECAUSE SUGAWARA-SAN....
BUT WHY WOULD SUGAWARA-SAN WANT REIKO-SAN TO FALL!?

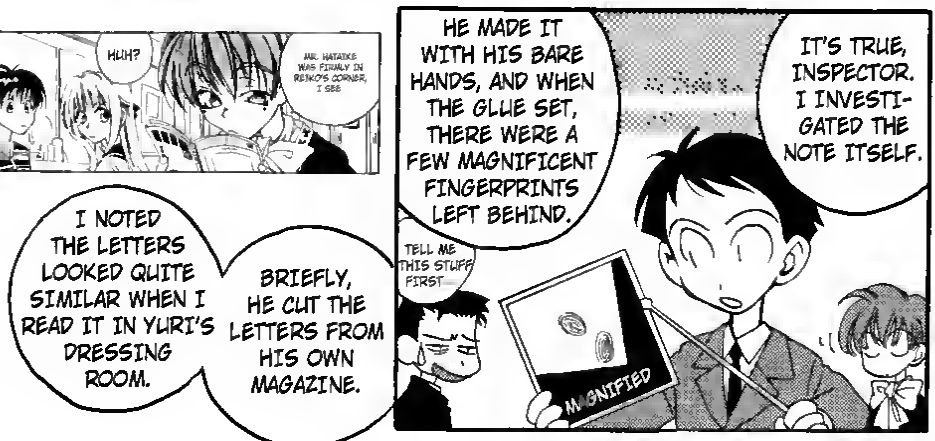

...IS THE SON OF THE WOMAN WHO DIED ON THIS STAGE, TEN YEARS AGO... SAORI TSURUTA.
WHAT IN THE-!?!?
WH-
REIKO-SAN HAD A PHOTO OF SAORI TSURUTA, AND THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT HER THAT REMINDED ME OF SUGAWARA-SAN.
SINCE WHEN DID THIS KID WIN YOU OVER?
SUDDENLY!!
SO I SEARCHED HER FAMILY REGISTER.
RIGHT, YASU?
OH HEY INSPECTOR, WORKIN HARD?

IF THE TARGET WAS YURI, THEN WHY WOULD HATAIKE HAVE TO DIE?
WHEN YURI WAS FORCED TO QUIT, IT SEEMED THAT THE AIM OF THE THREATS WAS REALIZED. BUT THAT WASN'T IT AT ALL.
THE EVIDENCE WAS IN THE BIT OF REFLECTIVE TAPE STUCK TO HATAIKE'S FINGER. IT POINTED DIRECTLY TOWARD SUGAWARA, WHO HAD LAID THE TAPE.
.....
AH....
THIS ENTIRE INCIDENT...
COMES FROM A MAN WHO WANTED TO TAKE HIS REVENGE ON THE PEOPLE WHO HOUNDED HIS MOTHER TO HER DEATH TEN YEARS AGO.
MOLOCH'S SACRIFICE WAS ALWAYS GOING TO BE REIKO KARYUUIN.
IF SUGAWARA REALLY WAS SAORI'S SON, HIS GOAL WAS NEVER YURI. THE ONE HE REALLY HATED WAS REIKO.
SO IF HE WAS REALLY OUR MOLOCH, I KNEW HE WOULD GO AFTER REIKO WHEN THINGS CAME DOWN TO IT.


SO IF THE PERFORMANCE HAD GONE FORWARD, SHE'D HAVE FOLLOWED IN YURI-SEMPAI'S FOOTSTEPS... LITERALLY
BUT THE FACT THAT YURI AOBA LIVED WAS A MIRACLE, AND HATAIKE STILL DIED!
AND JUST AS I THOUGHT, REIKO-SAN FELL.
IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT REIKO-SAN WAS THE ONE HE WAS TRULY AIMING FOR.


WELL, MASUMI-CHAN... YURI'S THREAT LETTER WAS MADE BY HATAIKE, YOU SEE.
WHAT!?
BUT JUST SOME REFLECTIVE TAPE ON THE FINGER DOESN'T MEAN THAT SUGAWARA WAS BEHIND HATAIKE'S ACCIDENT TOO.
YEAH YEAH
THAT STUFF'S ALL OVER THE SET.

HUH?
MR. HATAIKE WAS FISHIN IN REIKO'S CORNER, I SEE


I NOTED THE LETTERS LOOKED QUITE SIMILAR WHEN I READ IT IN YURI'S DRESSING ROOM.
BRIEFLY, HE CUT THE LETTERS FROM HIS OWN MAGAZINE.
HE MADE IT WITH HIS BARE HANDS, AND WHEN THE GLUE SET, THERE WERE A FEW MAGNIFICENT FINGERPRINTS LEFT BEHIND.
IT'S TRUE, INSPECTOR. I INVESTI-GATED THE NOTE ITSELF.
TELL ME THIS STUFF FIRST
MAGNIFIED

WHAAAT IS THAT??
AND ALSO, I FOUND A BIT OF PAPER WHICH RESEMBLES THE LETTERS FROM THE NOTES.
PWIP
HOWEVER, IF YOU LOOK AT IT HARD, YOU NOTE THAT IT IS QUITE OLD...
IF HATAIKE HAD DONE THE SAME THING TO SAORI...
IT WOULDN'T BE UNUSUAL IF YOU, HER SON, STILL HAD THAT OLD LETTER.
THE OTHER DAY WHEN I SAID, "I WONDER IF HATAIKE-SAN SENT THAT THREAT LETTER" SUGAWARA-SAN HAD A VERY STRANGE REACTION.
WHERE'D YOU SEE SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
THOUGH I WAS SPEAKING OF YURI'S THREAT, HE SEEMED TO MISTAKE IT FOR ANOTHER...
OH, YURI'S THREAT LETTER...
.. WELL, WE TURNED YURI-CHAN'S LETTER IN TO THE POLICE..
THIS IS A PART OF THAT TEN-YEAR-OLD LETTER, ISN'T IT, SUGAWARA-SAN?
....YES, IT IS.

HATAIKE WAS SO WEAK-WILLED! HE MISTOOK ME FOR MY MOTHER AND FELL OFF THE SET!
I WANTED TO KNOW WHO SENT MY MOM THAT THREAT!
WHETHER REIKO TOLD HATAIKE TO DO IT OR NOT...
AND YOU CAME TO HATE REIKO MORE AND MORE. YOU'D DO ANYTHING TO KILL HER.
THERE'S NO WAY HE DID IT ON HIS OWN. REIKO HAD TO HAVE TOLD HIM TO SEND THAT LETTER....!

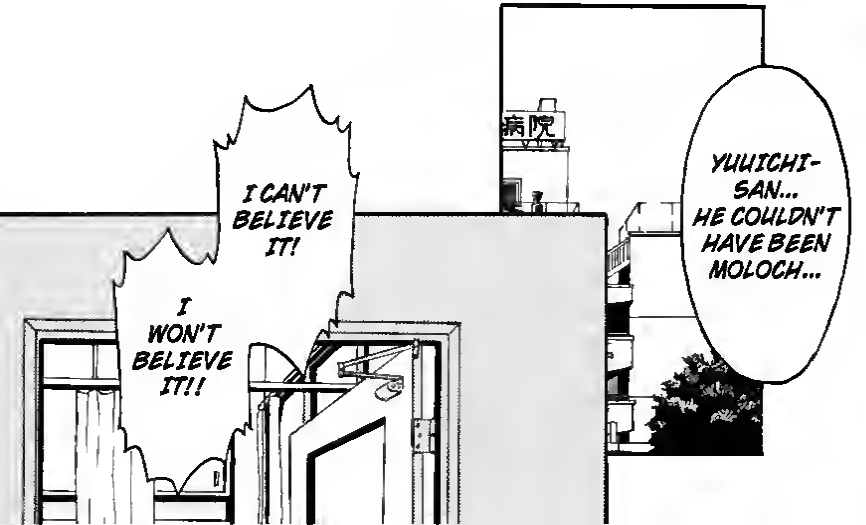
BUT YOU COULDN'T USE YOUR TAPE TRAP ON ANYONE BUT THE LEAD
THAT'S WHY YOU WANTED YURI-CHAN TO DROP THE LEAD ROLE, IF IT WAS AT ALL POSSIBLE
WHEN YURI-CHAN FELL OFF THE STAGE, YOU'D PUT SOMETHING INTO HER COSTUME, HADN'T YOU?
YOU WANTED TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE SIMPLE HARASSMENT, BUT IT TURNED INTO A GIANT ACCIDENT DIDN'T IT...
YURI... YURI WAS...
YES... YES!
IT WAS ME, I DID IT ALL!
BUT EVERY-THING, ALL OF IT... IT WAS ALL THAT WOMAN'S FAULT!!
!
STEP
Y-
YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT? SUGAWA-

AAAAAAA
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO WATCH YOUR MOTHER SUFFER AND GO CRAZY...!?
YOU'RE RIGHT!! I HATE THIS WOMAN SO, SO MUCH, I CAN'T EVEN STAND IT!
GRAB
S-SUGAWARA-SAN
AAAHHH! WHAT DO WE DO, LOKI-SAMA!?
DON'T DO ANYTHING RASH, SUGAWARA!
REIKO!
I'M GONNA KILL THIS BITCH AND I DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS AFTERWARD!
DON'T COME ANY CLOSER!! I'M GONNA KILL THIS BITCH, THEN MYSELF!!
IT'S TIME TO STOP, SUGAWARA-SAN.
DO YOU WANT TO MAKE YURI-CHAN CRY?

.....
YOU CANNOT SACRIFICE EVERYTHING TO THE DEMON CALLED REVENGE.
THAT'S WHAT YURI-CHAN'S PRESENCE HAS DONE FOR YOU, IS IT NOT...?
NN... NNNH...
RATTLE

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...
I FEEL SO AWFUL FOR SUGAWARA-SAN.....
HMPH, WHAT A PIECE OF TRASH.
THE NERVE OF THAT GUY!
IF JUST HARASSMENT CAN MAKE SOMEONE KILL THEMSELVES, THEN THE WORLD'S BETTER OFF WITHOUT THEM.
AND HE WAS CALLING THAT REVENGE? MORE LIKE A POINTLESS GRUDGE!
む
HMPH!

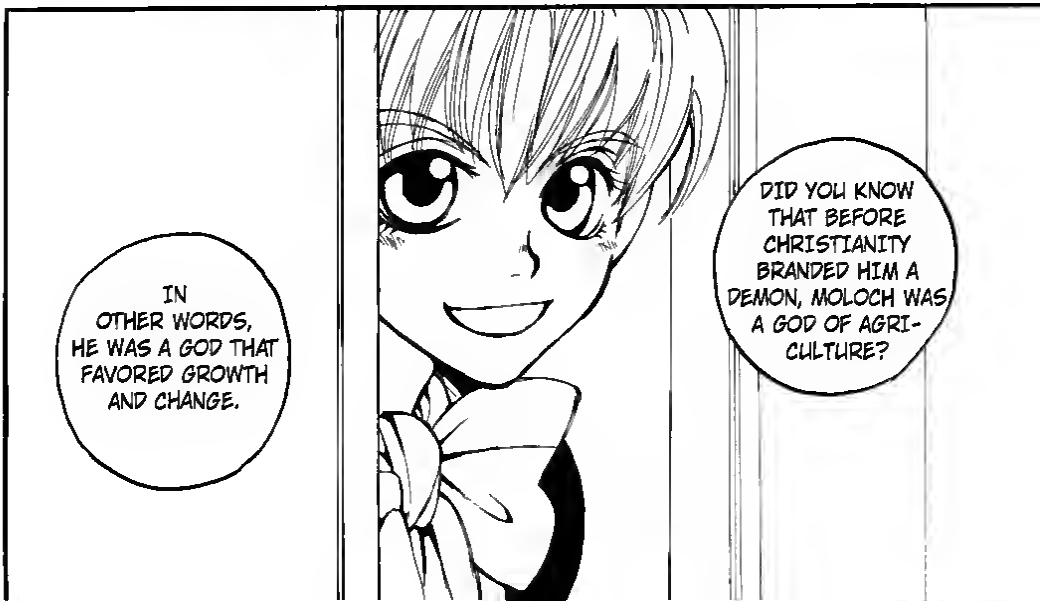
WE MAY HAVE CAUGHT THE CRIMINAL,
BUT YOU SHOULD STILL LOOK OUT FOR YOURSELF.
BECAUSE SOMEHOW I FEEL I HAVE DONE NOTHING TO END THE CURSE ON THIS STAGE.

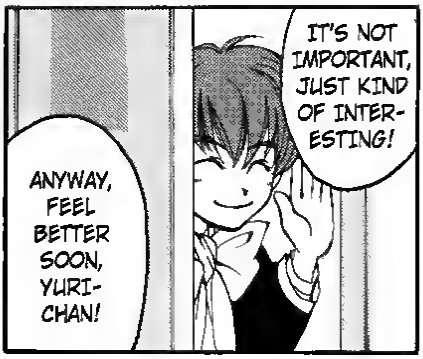

病院
YUUICHI-SAN... HE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MOLOCH...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!
I WON'T BELIEVE IT!!

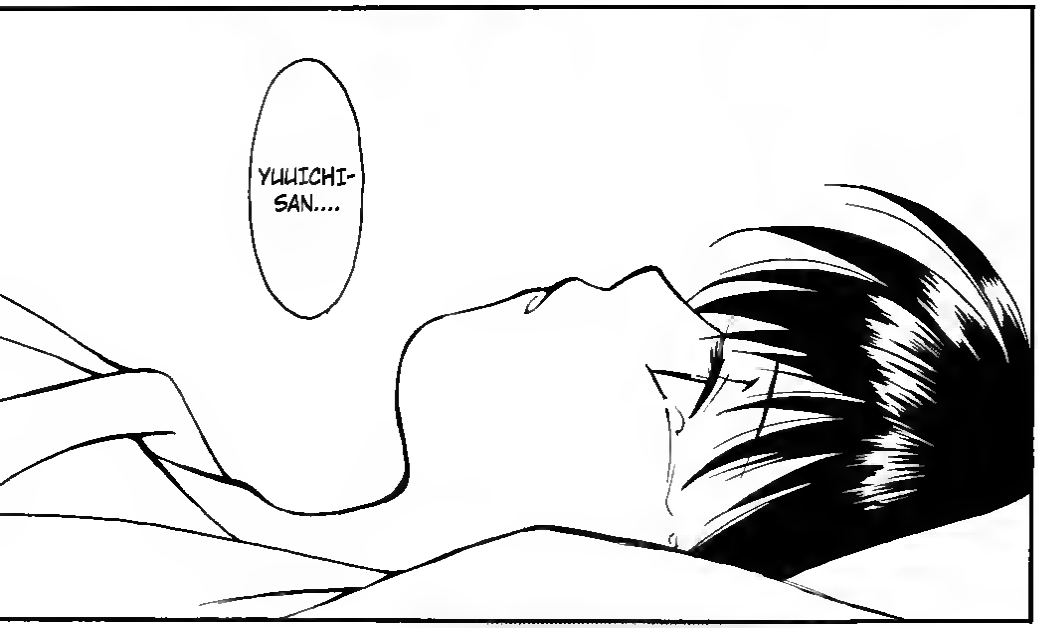
GET OUT OF HERE!!
LEAVE ME ALONE!!
LET'S GO HOME...
C'MON, LOKI-KUN, YAMINO-SAN.

OH, YES... YURI-CHAN.

.....
IT MUST BE SUCH A SHOCK...
THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO. SHE LOVED HIM AND TRUSTED HIM, AND HE DID SUCH A THING..

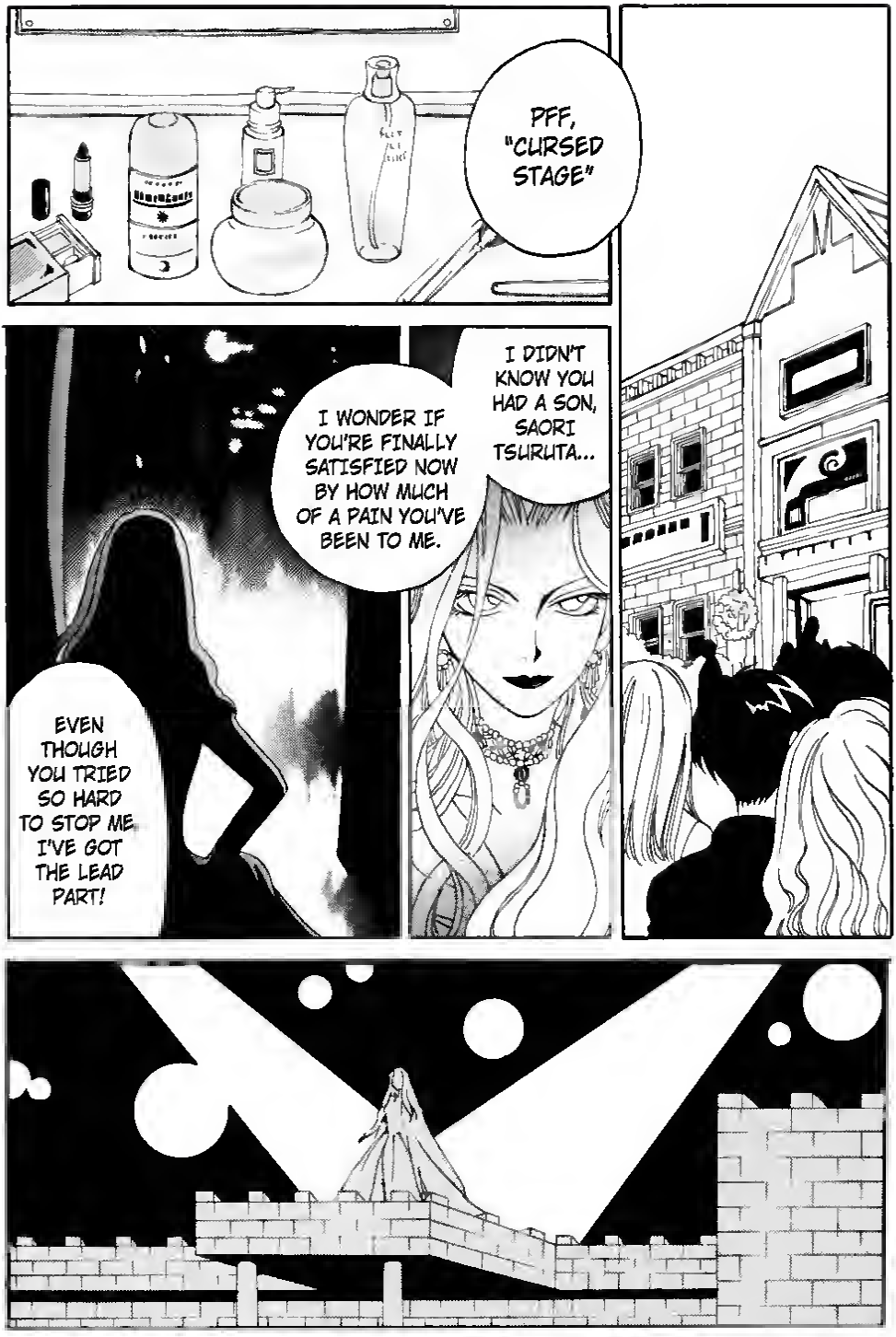

DID YOU KNOW THAT BEFORE CHRISTIANITY BRANDED HIM A DEMON, MOLOCH WAS A GOD OF AGRI-CULTURE?
IN OTHER WORDS, HE WAS A GOD THAT FAVORED GROWTH AND CHANGE.





I SUPPOSE IT'S TRUE... SINCE I HAD YOU WITH ME, I WORKED HARDER THAN EVER BEFORE.

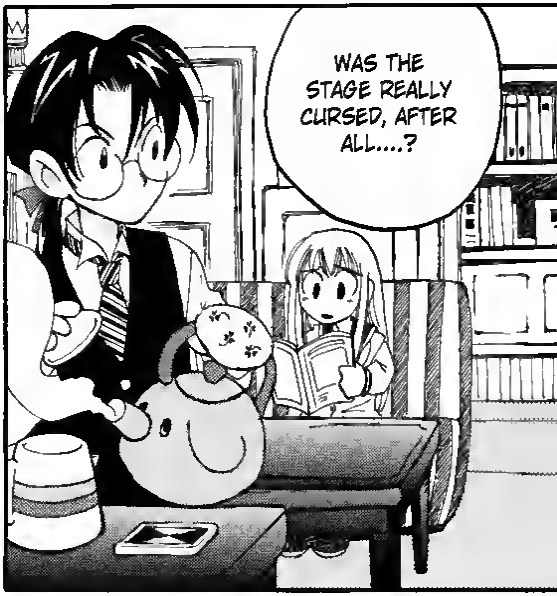
I... I WON'T FORGET THAT....


PFF, "CURSED STAGE"
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU HAD A SON, SAORI TSURUTA...
I WONDER IF YOU'RE FINALLY SATISFIED NOW BY HOW MUCH OF A PAIN YOU'VE BEEN TO ME.
EVEN THOUGH YOU TRIED SO HARD TO STOP ME, I'VE GOT THE LEAD PART!

AAAAA

UUUGH, PAPA'S GONNA HAVE A CORONARY...
EVEN THOUGH WE SOLVED THE CASE, REIKO-SAN STILL DIED...
THIS SAYS THE PLAY WAS SHUT DOWN AGAIN!

IT'S WEIRD HEARING A KID SAY THAT.
WHO KNOWS? THEY SAY THAT UNCHECKED DESIRE INEVITABLY BRINGS ABOUT RUIN.
HEH


WAS THE STAGE REALLY CURSED, AFTER ALL....?

WELL, THANKFULLY FOR YURI-SEMPAI AT LEAST...
...SHE'S MADE A COME-BACK AND STARTED TO GET MORE AND MORE JOBS.

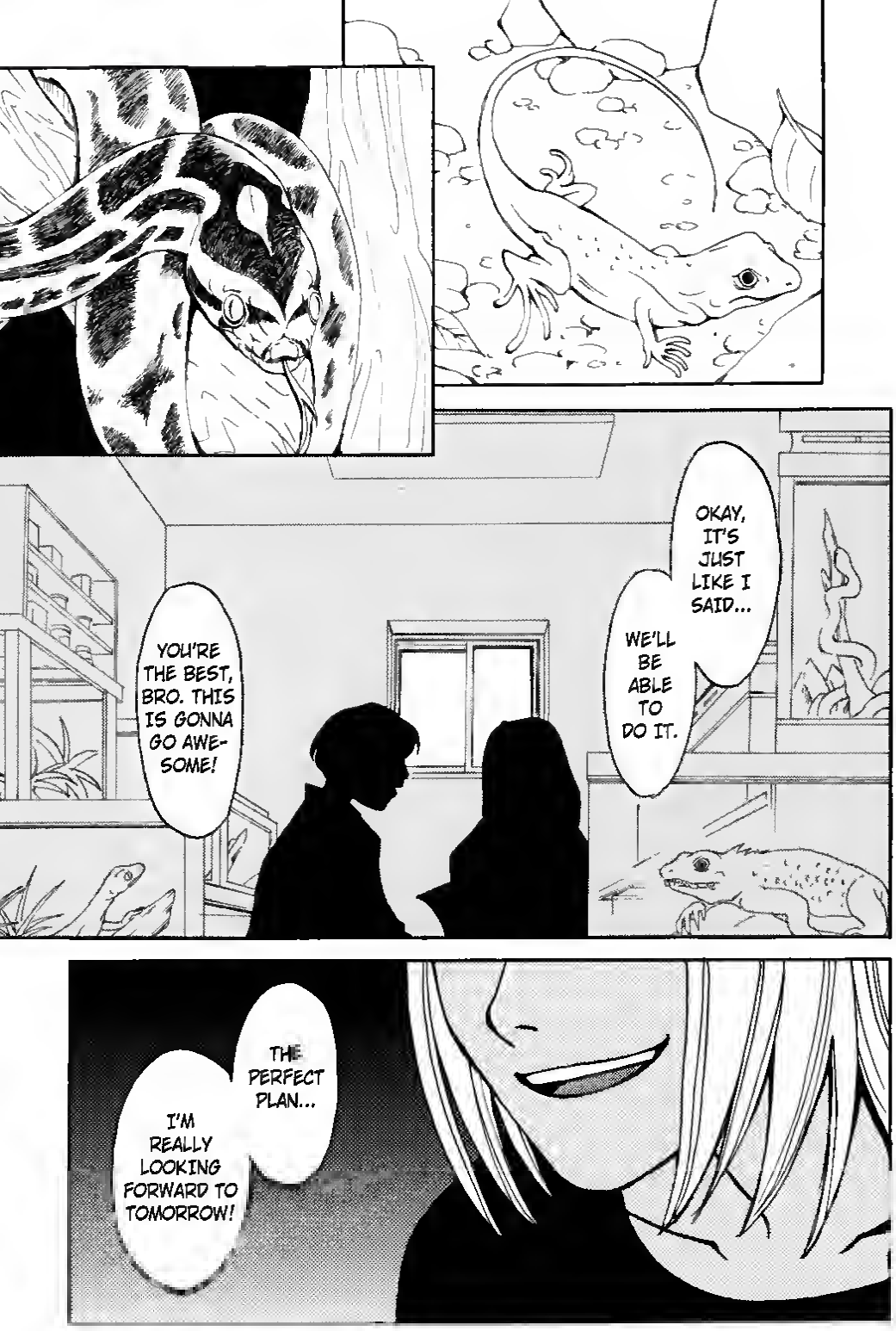
OH YEAH!
I CAME TO MAKE YOU SOMETHING NICE. I'M BORROWING THE KITCHEN.
WEIRD GIRL...
THE SINCERITY OF A WOMAN'S HEART!! SO COOL, YURI-SEMPAI!
AND EVEN THOUGH ALL THAT STUFF HAPPENED, SHE STILL LOVES SUGAWARA-SAN!!
EEEEEEEE EEEEEEEE
BY THE WAY, WHERE HAVE THOSE SHIKIGAMI GOTTEN TO?
AH HAH
OH, THOSE? I JUST MADE THEM WITH THE SHIKIGAMI. THEY CAN TURN INTO ANY SMALL THING.
PU NYAN
THAT REMINDS ME, THOSE THREAT LETTERS... YOU MADE THEM, RIGHT LOKI-SAMA?
THE ONES SUGAWARA AND TOOMINE GOT...
THIS CASE MADE ME...
..RETHINK MY VIEW OF YOU, LOKI-KUN!
YOU WERE PRETTY COOL!
HERE'S A PRESENT FOR YOU, LOKI-KUN!
TA DAH!
!

...AND ALSO A TRICK-STER GOD...
?
SMIRK
I MEAN, I'M A DETECTIVE, AFTER ALL!
OF COURSE I WAS!
PUNYAN
PUNYAN
PUNYAN
PUNYAN
AAAARGH!!! WHAT ARE THESE!?
KACHIK
ガラ
I SUPPOSE THERE REALLY WAS A CURSE...
EVEN NOW, I CANNOT QUITE BELIEVE THAT REIKO-CHAN IS DEAD...
PUNYA
MY NECRO-MANCY...
NO MATTER HOW I TRY, I JUST CAN'T GET IT RIGHT ANYMORE...

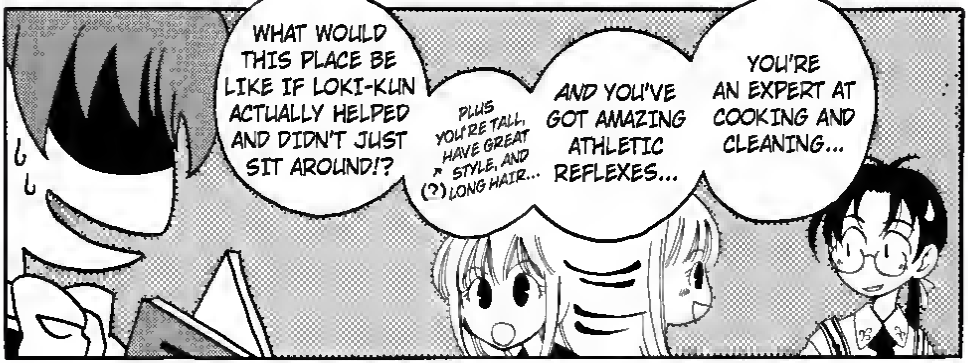
NIGHT 4

LOKI-SAMA IS KIDNAPPED!?

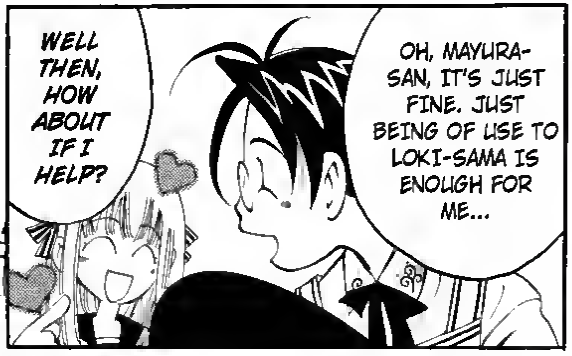
BORN FROM A TRICKSTER GOD, THE MIDGARD SERPENT WAS SO FEARED BY ALL IN THE WORLD THAT IT WAS THROWN DOWN TO THE BOTTOM OF THE DEEPEST SEA.
THERE IT LIVED AS BEST IT COULD, EVENTUALLY GROWING INTO A GRAND WYRM THAT WAS LARGE ENOUGH TO ENCIRCLE THE ENTIRE EARTH.
IT'S SO DARK AND COLD AND LONELY HERE....


OKAY, IT'S JUST LIKE I SAID...
WE'LL BE ABLE TO DO IT.
YOU'RE THE BEST, BRO. THIS IS GONNA GO AWE-SOME!
THE PERFECT PLAN...
I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO TOMORROW!

SPANISH OMELETS ARE NOW BEING SERVED!
POP
WOOOWWWW! YAMINO-SAN, YOUR SKILL AT COOKING IS SECOND TO NONE! LOOKS TASTY!!!
OH, NO! IT'S ONE OF MY HOBBIES, YOU SEE. I'M HAPPY TO DO IT!
. . . . .
THAT MUST BE HARD TO DO ALL ALONE!!
AND EVEN THOUGH THIS MANSION IS SO HUGE, YOU KEEP IT SO CLEAN!
AND DID YOU SEW THAT APRON YOURSELF!?
HEY. FEED ME.

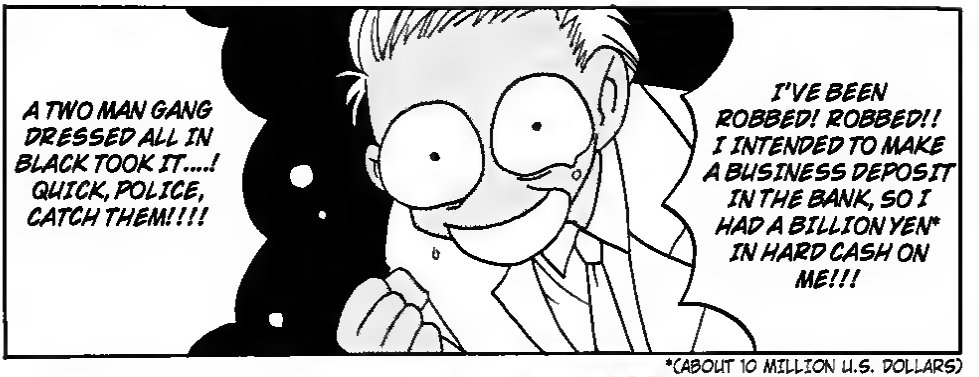

WHAT WOULD THIS PLACE BE LIKE IF LOKI-KUN ACTUALLY HELPED AND DIDN'T JUST SIT AROUND!?
PLUS YOU'RE TALL, HAVE GREAT (?) STYLE, AND LONG HAIR...
AND YOU'VE GOT AMAZING ATHLETIC REFLEXES...
YOU'RE AN EXPERT AT COOKING AND CLEANING...

SHEESH... MAYURA ACTS LIKE SHE DOESN'T THINK I'M WORTH HAVING AROUND!
EVEN THOUGH IF IT WEREN'T FOR ME, THIS DETECTIVE AGENCY WOULDN'T EVEN EXIST!
YOU AGREE, DON'T YOU, SHIKI-GAMI?
PUNYA

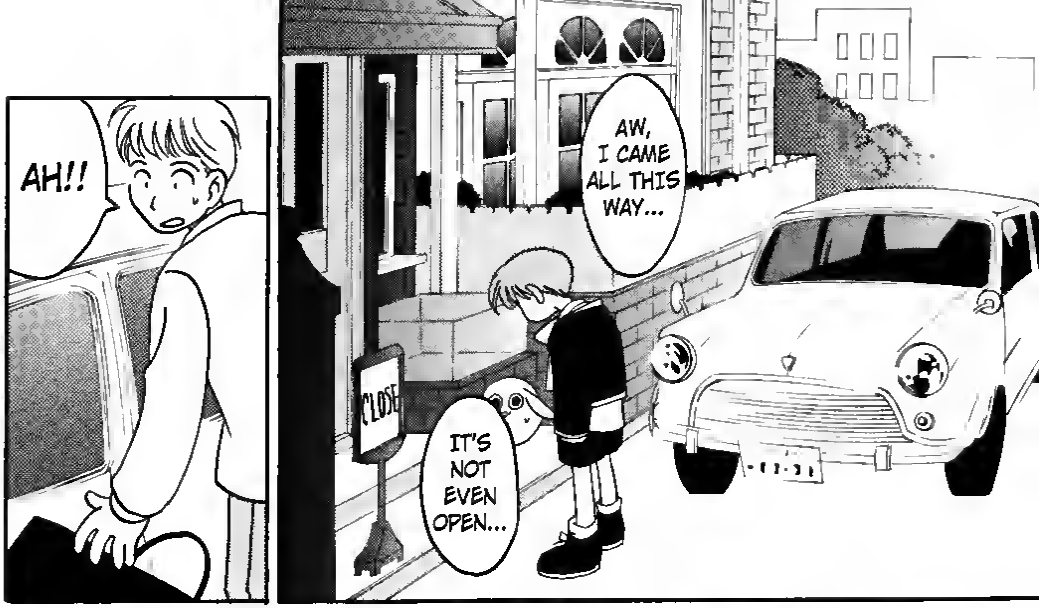

WELL THEN, HOW ABOUT IF I HELP?
OH, MAYURA-SAN, IT'S JUST FINE. JUST BEING OF USE TO LOKI-SAMA IS ENOUGH FOR ME...

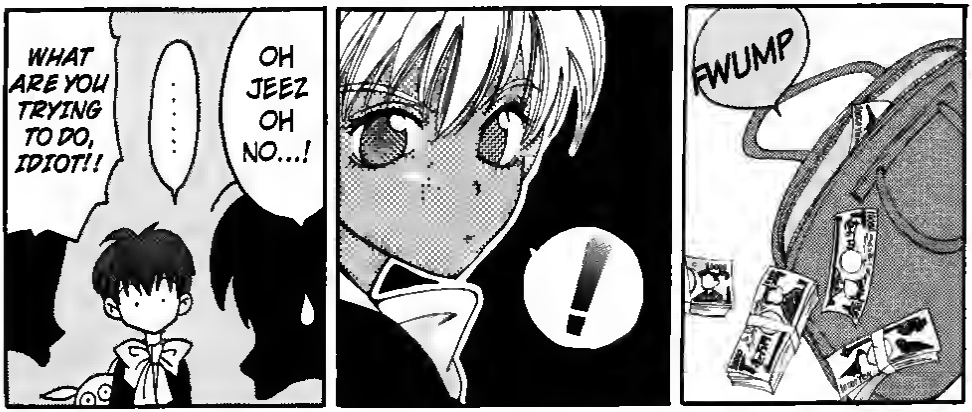
...LOKI-SAMA....
I'VE HAD ENOUGH. I'M GOING TO GO GET SOME CAKE, BY MYSELF.
PUNYAAN

ALL RIGHT, HE'S HERE. LET'S GO RIGHT NOW!
THUD!
UGHAAA
WH- WHAT'RE YOU....
FWSH!
FWSH!

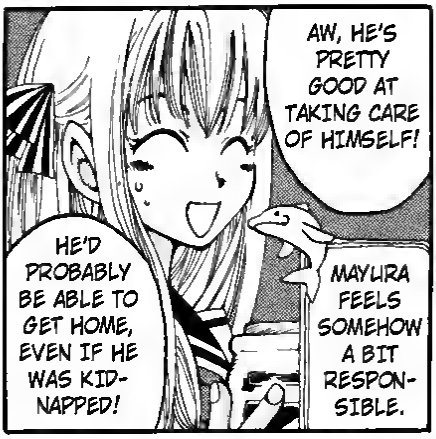

A TWO MAN GANG DRESSED ALL IN BLACK TOOK IT....! QUICK, POLICE, CATCH THEM!!!!
I'VE BEEN ROBBED! ROBBED!! I INTENDED TO MAKE A BUSINESS DEPOSIT IN THE BANK, SO I HAD A BILLION YEN* IN HARD CASH ON ME!!!

*(ABOUT 10 MILLION U.S. DOLLARS)

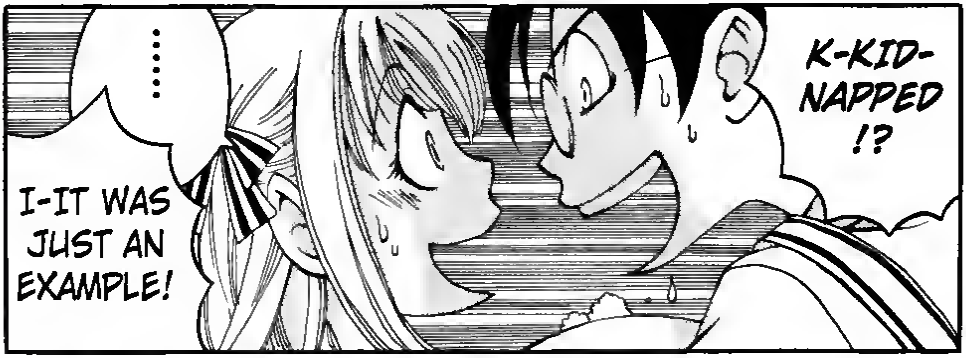

AH!!
AW, I CAME ALL THIS WAY...
CLOSE
IT'S NOT EVEN OPEN...


WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO, IDIOT!!
.....
OH JEEZ OH NO...!
!
FWUMP

YOU TWO COULDN'T BE THE ONES WHO JUST ROBBED THAT GUY, COULD YOU?

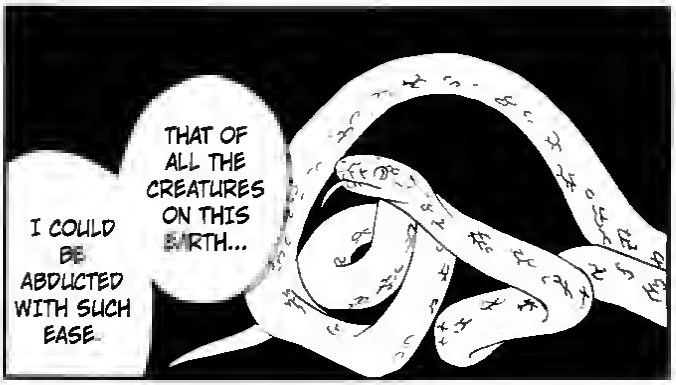

AW, HE'S PRETTY GOOD AT TAKING CARE OF HIMSELF!
HE'D PROBABLY BE ABLE TO GET HOME, EVEN IF HE WAS KIDNAPPED!
MAYURA FEELS SOMEHOW A BIT RESPONSIBLE.

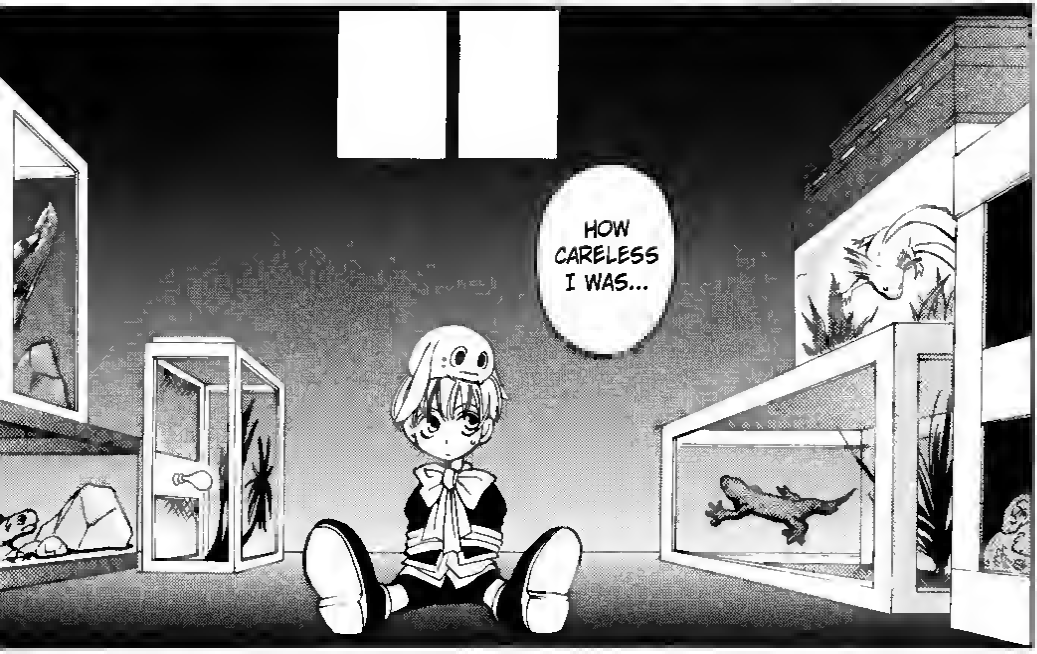
I'M A BIT WORRIED ABOUT LOKI-SAMA GOING OUT ALL ALONE.


K-KIDNAPPED!?
I-IT WAS JUST AN EXAMPLE!

GRAB
YOU TOSSED THE BAG AND EACH OF YOU IS CARRYING SOME CASH. NOW IT'S TIME TO RUN FOR IT IN THAT CAR, IS THAT ABOUT RIGHT?
YOU WORE BLACK AS CAMOFLAGE, BUT NOW THAT YOUR CRIME IS OVER, YOU'VE SWITCHED TO STREET CLOTHES TO BLEND IN WITH THE CROWD.
SWEAT
SWEAT
SWEAT
SWEAT

A CAR?
ARE WE THINKING OF THE SAME LOKI-KUN?
AND IF THEY WERE TO PUT HIM IN A CAR...
HE'S BEAUTIFUL AND NOBLE AND OH SO DELICATE...
CHANCES ARE HIGH THAT KID-NAPPERS WOULD CHOOSE HIM.
LET ME OUT!
AAUGH! STOP THE CAR!!!
OH, YOU'RE OUT OF PEPPER, YAMINO-SAN...
DELICATE, HUH...?
THE SMELL, THE ENGINE NOISE, THE MOTION, THE CRAMPED QUARTERS...
HE'S REALLY QUITE DELICATE!
LOKI-SAMA HATES MOTOR VEHICLES, YOU SEE.
PROLLY 'COS HE'S SO SCARED OF US.
HA HA HA
THE KID PASSED OUT, BRO!


I COULD BE ABDUCTED WITH SUCH EASE.
THAT OF ALL THE CREATURES ON THIS EARTH...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...

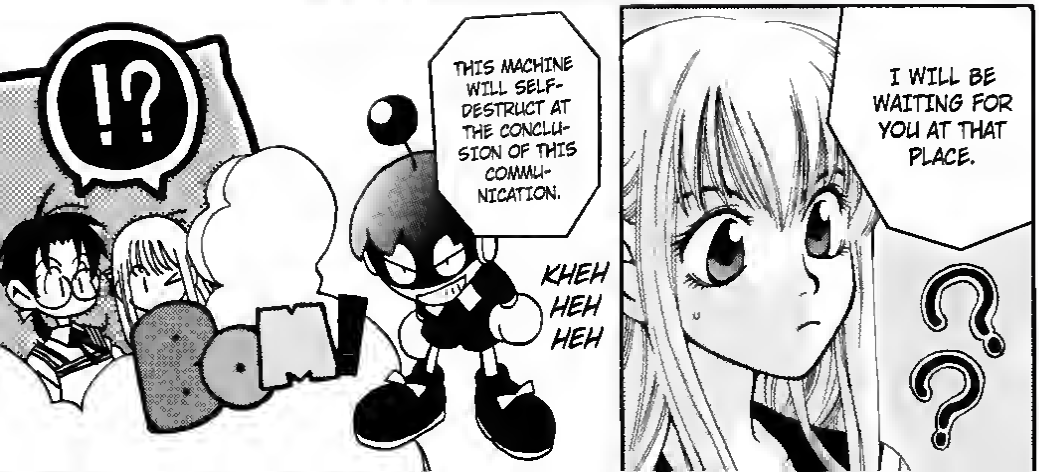

HOW CARELESS I WAS...

SMILE
AH! I'VE GOT IT!
NOW THAT'S A GOOD IDEA!

AND WHERE HAVE I FOUND MYSELF...?
HMMM..

LOKI-KUN'S LATE... I WONDER WHERE HE'S GONE?
SINCE WE'RE OUT OF PEPPER, WE SHOULD GO GET SOME AND LOOK FOR HIM...
EVEN I'M GETTING WORRIED.
OHH.. LOKI-SAMA...
WH-WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?
DROP
FLP
FLP
OH, MY? THAT IS ONE OF LOKI-SAMA'S ATTENDANT RAVENS....
I'VE BEEN KIDNAPPED BY A TWO-MAN GANG WITH TONS OF MONEY! COME AND GET ME, OKAY?
HEYYYY... RYUUSUKE YAMINO-KUN AND MAYURA DAIDOUJI-KUN. HOW'S IT GOING?
DOLL LOKI-KUN HERE WITH A BUILT-IN TAPE TO GIVE YOU A STATUS REPORT!

WHA....
I'M NOT SURE WHERE I AM... I'M GOING TO DESCRIBE WHAT I SEE OUT THE WINDOW FOR YOU.
HATI ENGULFING SKOLL.
THE FLOWING WAR CHANTS OF THE HALLS OF VALHALLA.
GATEKEEPER HEIMDALL IS NEAR.
THE SPRING OF HVERGELMIR, AS WELL.

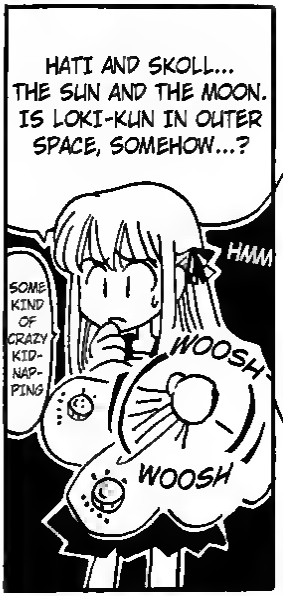

!?
THIS MACHINE WILL SELF-DESTRUCT AT THE CONCLUSION OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
KHEH HEH HEH
BOOM!
I WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU AT THAT PLACE.
??

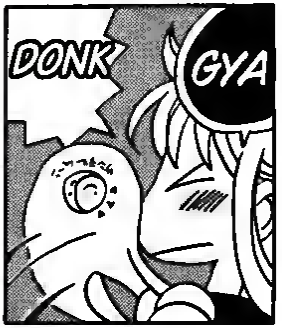
LET'S GO BUY THAT PEPPER, YAMINO-SAN!
A HA HA
IT'S GOTTA BE LOKI-KUN MAKING A BAD JOKE!
... KID-NAPPED??
IT WAS A SHIKI-GAMI ALL ALONG...
PUNYAN!
FAMILIAR LEVEL UP!
I'VE GOTTA BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS...
TWITCH TWITCH
BEEN SEEIN' YOU A LOT LATELY...
!?
AH.
NAH!
SUS-PICIOUS PAIRS?
WELL THEN, THAT'S ALL WE WANT TO KNOW!
HAVE YOU SEEN ANY SUSPICIOUS PAIRS?
THERE WAS A ROBBERY IN THIS AREA; ONE BILLION YEN WAS STOLEN. WE'RE INVESTIGATING.

KEEP YOUR NOSE OUT OF THIS BUSINESS, YOU TWO.
A MUGGING? THIS PLACE IS PRETTY DANGEROUS, HUH?
MA-MAYU-RA-SAN
!
WHAT ABOUT WHAT LOKI-SAMA SAID... ABOUT THE TWO-MAN GANG THAT HAS A LOT OF MONEY...

YOU TWO WANNA SEE IF YOU'RE THE EQUAL OF A GREAT DETECTIVE?
WA HA HA HA HA HA
NOW YOU HAVE THE CHANCE!

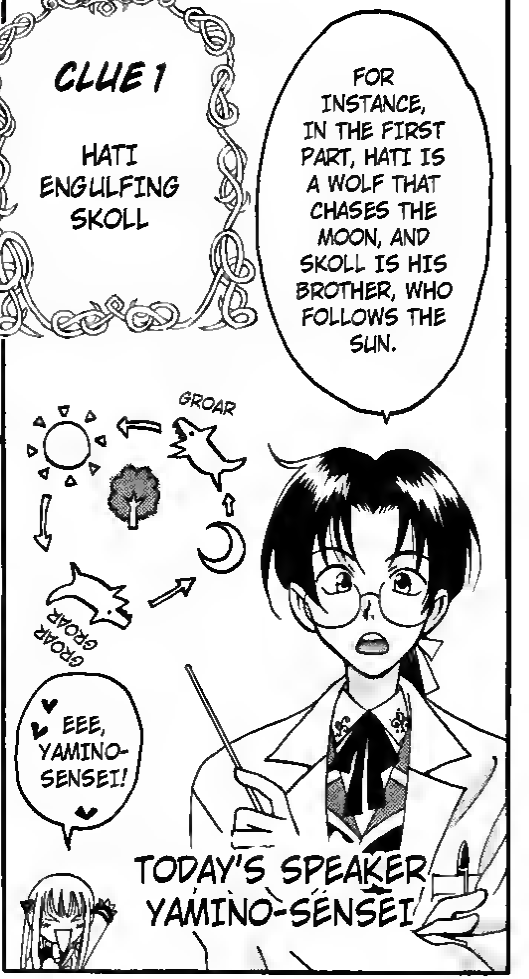
WELL... THE ONLY CLUE WE HAVE IS THE STATUS REPORT HE SENT....
THIS IS TERRIBLE!!! WE HAVE TO LOOK FOR HIM, MAYURA-SAN!
WH-WHAT SHOULD WE DO!?
THAT RIDDLEY SORT OF THING... I DON'T GET IT AT ALL...
HA HA HA...
UM.... WHAT'S THAT?
WELL... THOSE ARE PHRASES THAT DERIVE FROM...
THE LANGUAGE OF THE NORSE POETIC EDDA.
OHHHHH! THE POETIC EDDA!!
THE GERMANIC TRIBES OF EUROPE SPREAD STORIES OF THE CREATION OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH, AS WELL AS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE GODS.
THEY WERE COMPILED IN A BOOK KNOWN AS THE POETIC EDDA.


HATI AND SKOLL... THE SUN AND THE MOON. IS LOKI-KUN IN OUTER SPACE, SOMEHOW...?
HMM
SOME KIND OF CRAZY KIDNAPPING
WOOSH
WOOSH


DONK
GYA

CLUE 1
HATI ENGULFING SKOLL

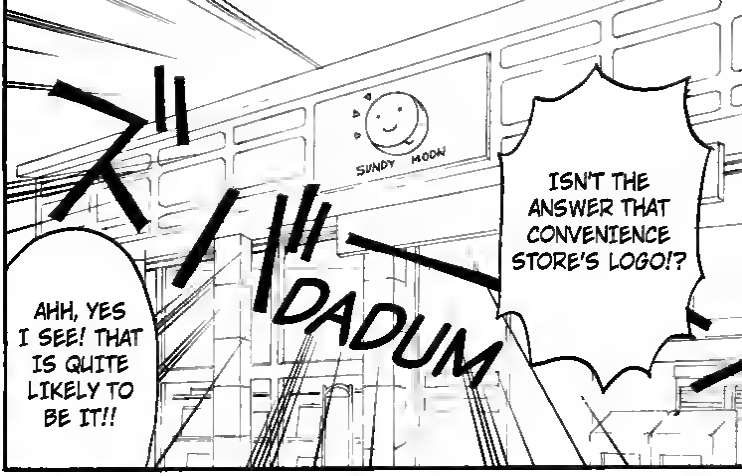
ACCORDING TO NORSE MYTHOLOGY, THE REASON FOR THE CYCLE OF DAY AND NIGHT IS THAT THESE WOLVES CHASE THE SUN AND MOON.


FOR INSTANCE, IN THE FIRST PART, HATI IS A WOLF THAT CHASES THE MOON, AND SKOLL IS HIS BROTHER, WHO FOLLOWS THE SUN.
GROAR
GROAR
GROAR
EEE, YAMINO-SENSEI!
TODAY'S SPEAKER YAMINO-SENSEI

FWOOOM
I GOT IT, YAMINO-SENSEI!!
I REALLY AM A SUPER GREAT DETECTIVE!!

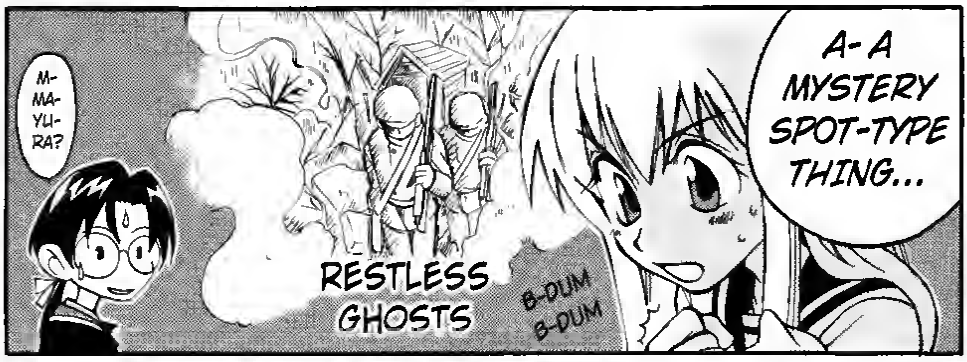
AOOWWW
AH!!

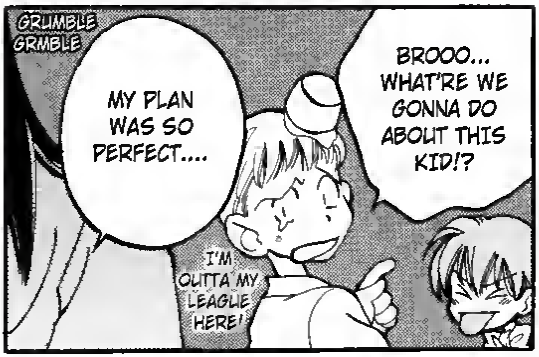
AW..
BUT THAT CONVENIENCE STORE IS A CHAIN, SO THE ANSWER IS LIKELY NOT THIS ONE IN PARTICULAR.


SUNDY MOON
ISN'T THE ANSWER THAT CONVENIENCE STORE'S LOGO!?
DADUM
AHH, YES I SEE! THAT IS QUITE LIKELY TO BE IT!!

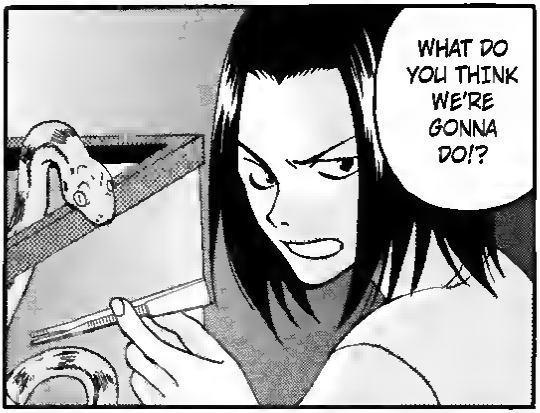
WARRIORS
THE HALLS OF VALHALLA ARE THE HOME OF THE WAR GOD ODIN. THE SPIRITS OF GREAT WARRIORS AND SOLDIERS GATHER THERE.
THEN THE FLOWING WAR SONGS MUST BE COMING FROM....

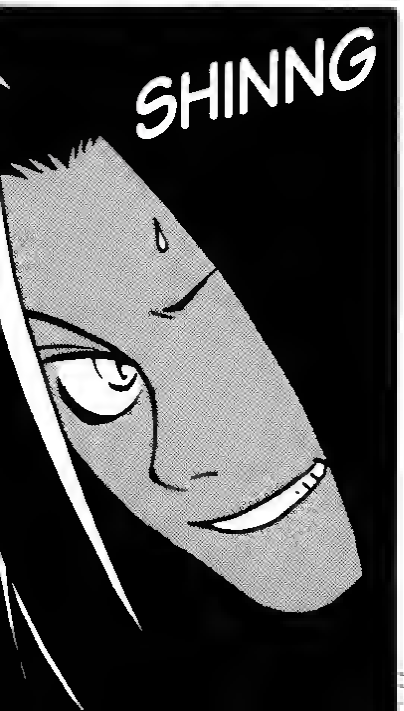
WELL, I THINK I'VE GOT THE HANG OF IT NOW! LET'S TRY THE NEXT CLUE, YAMINO-SAN!
HEH HEH
CLUE 2
THE FLOWING WAR CHANTS OF THE HALLS OF VALHALLA.

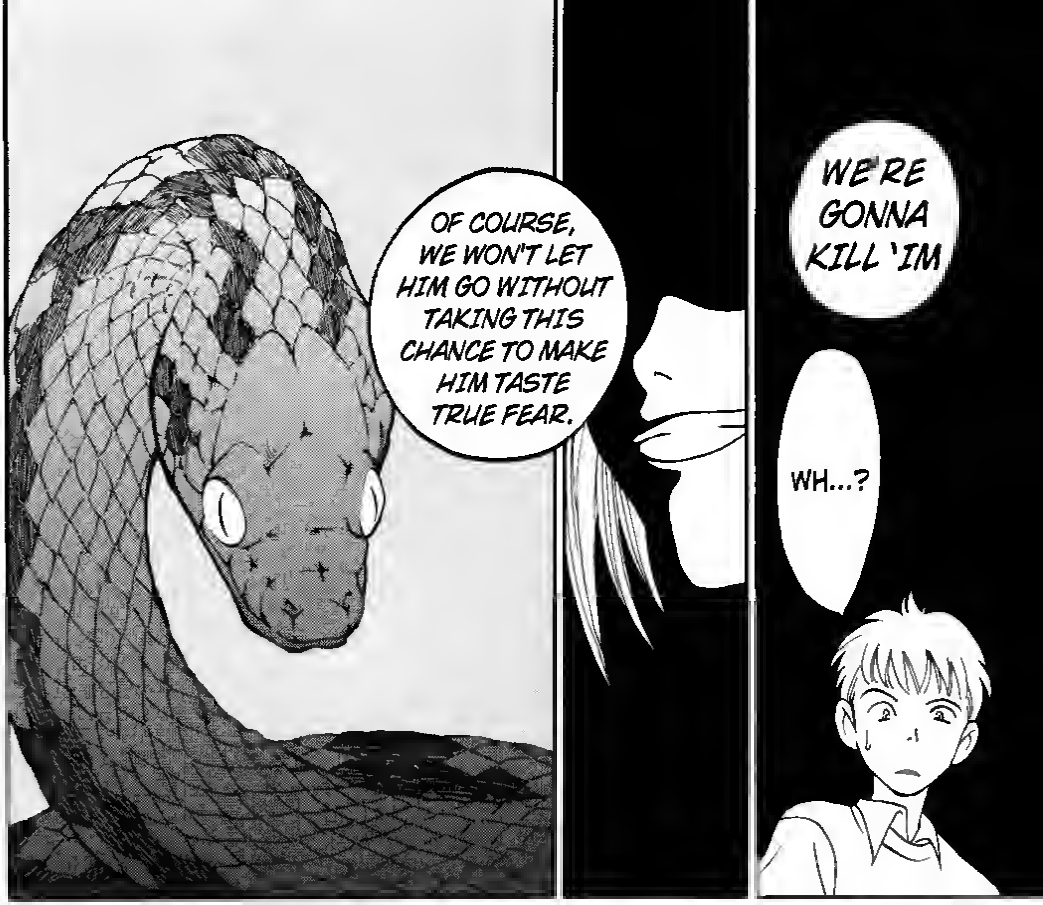

M-MA-YU-RA?
RESTLESS GHOSTS
B-DUM B-DUM
A-A MYSTERY SPOT-TYPE THING...


GRUMBLE GRMBLE
MY PLAN WAS SO PERFECT....
BROOO... WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO ABOUT THIS KID!?
I'M OUTTA MY LEAGUE HERE!

UGH, THIS STUFF IS GROSS!!
I WANT HAAGEN-DAZS COFFEE CREAM!!
KICK


WHAT DO YOU THINK WE'RE GONNA DO!?


SHINNG

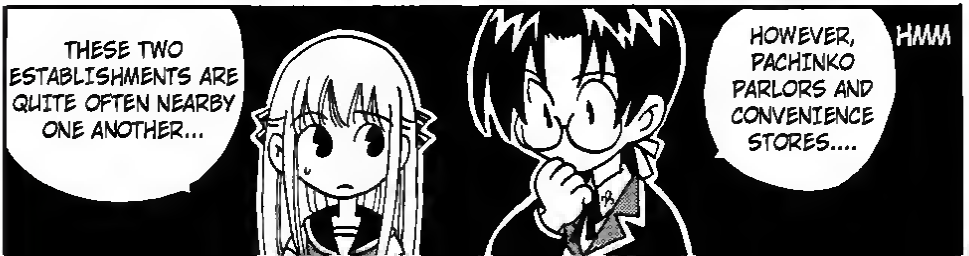


MILITARY SONGS...
HMMM... THE HALLS OF VALHALLA...
W-WHY DO YOU KNOW THAT SONG, MAYURA-SAN...?
IT'S LIKE FROM THE HALLS OF MON-TE-ZUUUMA TO THE SHORES OF TRIPOLIII~!
OH, THAT'S NOT A MILITARY SONG!
WHAT'S A CONSIDERED A MILITARY SONG? SIILENT NIIIIGHT AND THE LIKE?

JASRAC 出0304822-301

THIS LIVELY MELODY...
DOES THAT SAY.. "SOLDIER!?"
CORPORATE SOLDIERS! TAKE YOUR LEAVE HERE!
...MAYURA-SAN.
AH!

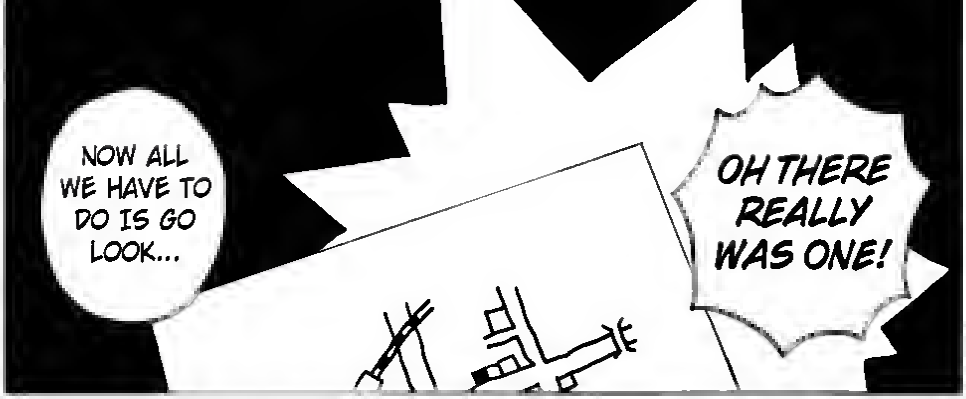
PACHINKO
YUKARI
IT'S A MILITARY MARCH!
IT WAS A PACHINKO PARLOR!!
EVEN ODIN WOULD BE AMAZED.
IT WASN'T A MYSTERY SPOT...

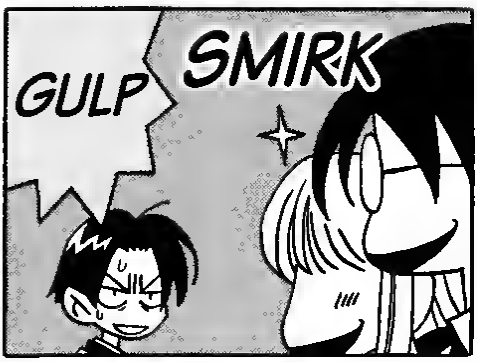

THESE TWO ESTABLISHMENTS ARE QUITE OFTEN NEARBY ONE ANOTHER...
HOWEVER, PACHINKO PARLORS AND CONVENIENCE STORES....
HMM

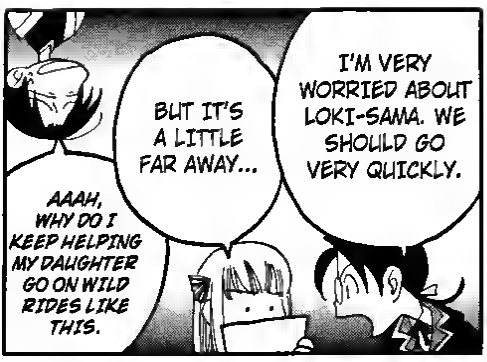
I'M GETTIN' FIRED UP!!
BUT HEY, WE'RE GETTING CLOSER! LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT THE NEXT CLUE!
CLUE 3
GATEKEEPER HEIMDALL IS NEAR.
HEIMDALL IS THE GOD WHO GUARDS THE GATE OF ASGARD, WHICH IS THE DWELLING PLACE OF THE GODS.
HUH!? THE REALM OF THE GODS?
ONCE AGAIN, YAMINO-SENSEI.
OHHH? DID YOU BUY A NEW BIKE, PAPA?
MMHMHMHM... THIS ONE CAN CARRY TWO RIDERS! YOU WANNA TRY?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING OUTSIDE A PACHINKO PARLOR?
MAYURA!

WAIT... A PRIEST?
BUT PAPA, AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE WORKING? NOT VERY PRIESTLY...
A HA HA HA
VESPA PX 200E!!
IT WAS DELIVERED JUST NOW, IT'S BRAND NEW.
IT'S STICKING TO THE TRADITIONAL, CLASSIC VESPA DESIGN. A 2 STROKE SINGLE CYLINDER 200 CC ENGINE. VERY POWERFUL!
WH...
YOU'VE GOT A POINT!
AH!! I GOT IT!! HEIMDALL!
COULD THAT BE THE TORII GATE AT A SHINTO SHRINE!?
MAYURA... ARE YOU GETTING MIXED UP IN CRAZY THINGS AGAIN...
THOUGH YOU'RE FAR TOO CUTE FOR YOUR PAPA NOT TO HELP YOU.
A DOTING FATHER
TRY TO DRAW A MAP OF ALL THE PLACES PACHINKO PARLORS, CONVENIENCE STORES, AND SHRINES ARE IN THE SAME PLACE!
WELL, WHATEVER, PAPA.
CUT IN!
NO WAY, NO! THE TORII IS NOT, IN ACTUALITY, A GATE.
IT IS MEANT TO BE AN ENTRANCE TO SACRED GROUND FOR HUMANS.

OH, WOW! YOU'VE GROWN UP A LITTLE, HAVE YOU?
YOU CAN SPEAK~
ROGI-SHAMA I'NE COEM BAGK!
PUNYAA
PUNYA
PUNYA
YOU SURE SEEM TO BE HAVING A LOT OF FUN ALL ALONE IN HERE...
E... E-CHAM! ♡
EXCELLENT, EXCELLENT. YOU'VE DONE EXCELLENTLY SO YOUR NAME SHALL BE ETCHAN!
US BIG BOYS THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANNA COME PLAY WITH US...!


NOW ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS GO LOOK...
OH THERE REALLY WAS ONE!


GULP
SMIRK

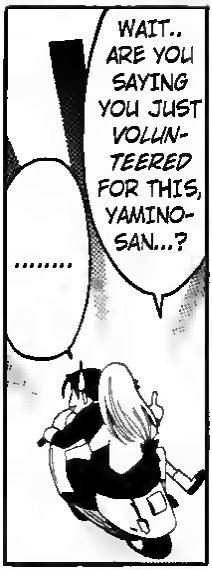

AAAH, WHY DO I KEEP HELPING MY DAUGHTER GO ON WILD RIDES LIKE THIS.
BUT IT'S A LITTLE FAR AWAY...
I'M VERY WORRIED ABOUT LOKI-SAMA. WE SHOULD GO VERY QUICKLY.

AAAAAA VESPA-CHAN!
WE'LL RETURN IT LATER, DON'T WORRY!
PAPA-SAN, WE'LL BE BORROWING THIS!
BRM BRM

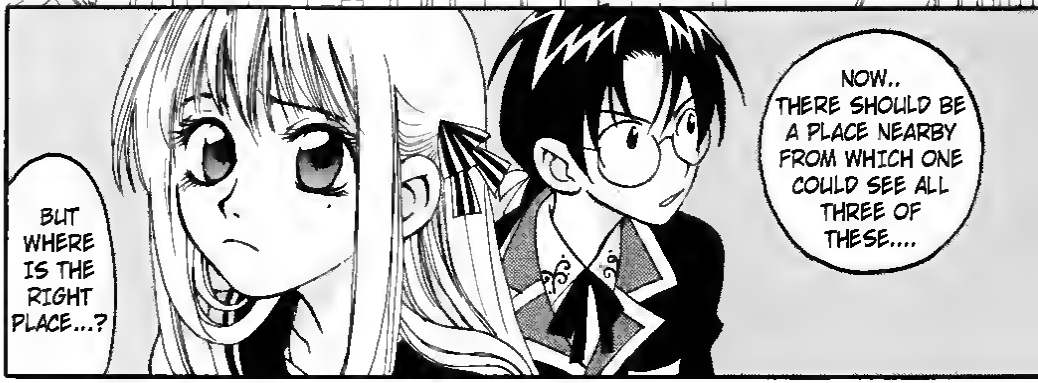
OH, I HOPE THAT LOKI-SAMA IS SAFE....!
.....
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK YOU...
HOW ARE YOU AND LOKI-KUN RELATED TO EACH OTHER?
IS HE YOUR BROTHER OR YOUR COUSIN? YOU GUYS DON'T LOOK LIKE FATHER AND SON...

IT'S SO DARK AND COLD AND LONELY HERE....
...AH YES. IT'S... SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
I JUST WANT TO BE USEFUL TO LOKI-SAMA AND STAY NEAR HIM AS MUCH AS I CAN...

OH, LOOK AT THAT, MAYURA-SAN, WE'RE HERE!


WAIT.. ARE YOU SAYING YOU JUST VOLUNTEERED FOR THIS, YAMINO-SAN...?
.....

SO I ACT AS SOME MANNER OF COOKING, CLEANING, HOUSEKEEPING SHADOW.
?

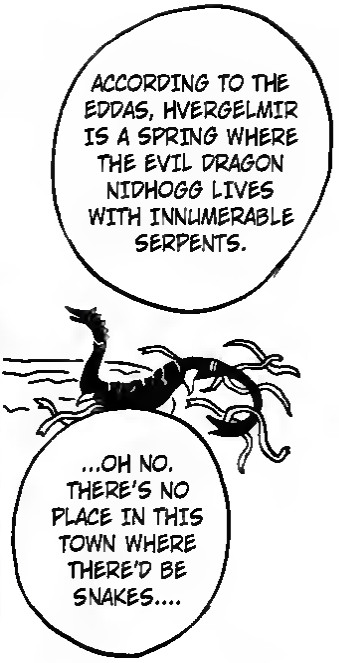


CLUE 4

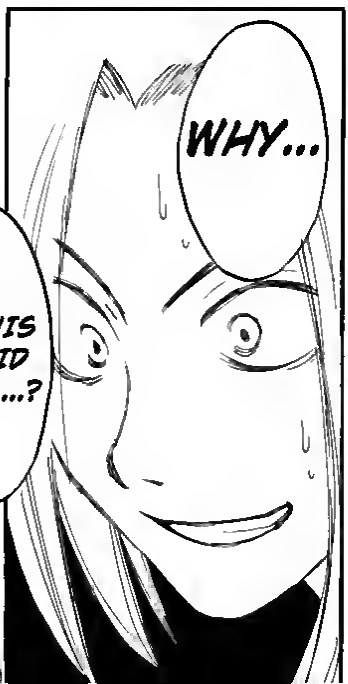
THE SPRING OF HVERGELMIR AS WELL.

SH-SHALL WE ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THE FINAL CLUE, MAYURA-SAN?
THE BAD GUYS' HIDEOUT PROBABLY LOOKS SOMETHING LIKE THIS, RIGHT!?
BDUMP BDUMP

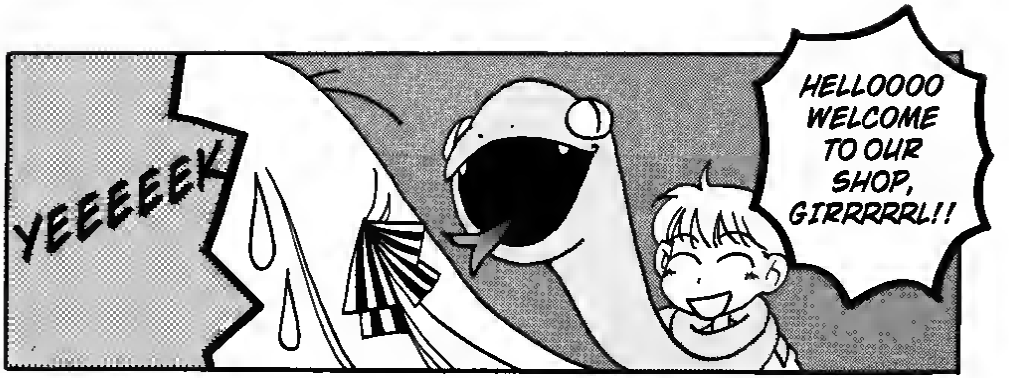
爬虫類専門店ポエ
AH!!
REPTILE SPECIALTY STORE....

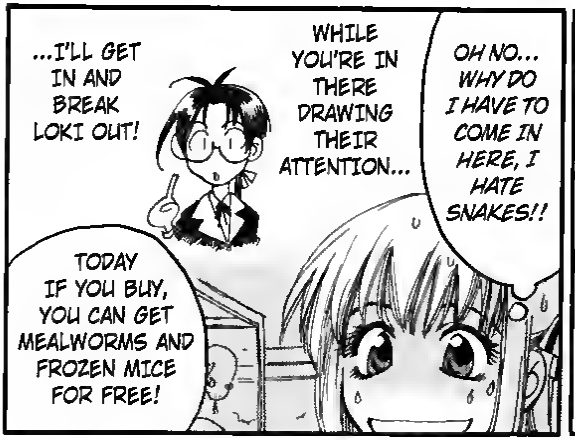

ACCORDING TO THE EDDAS, HVERGELMIR IS A SPRING WHERE THE EVIL DRAGON NIDHOGG LIVES WITH INNUMERABLE SERPENTS.
...OH NO. THERE'S NO PLACE IN THIS TOWN WHERE THERE'D BE SNAKES....

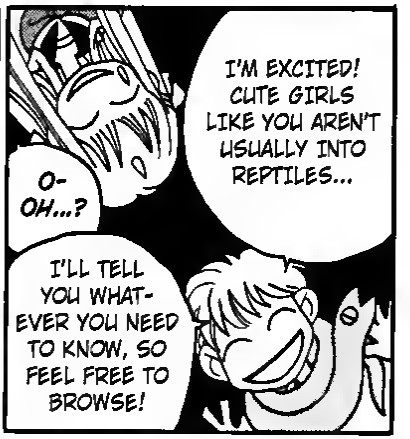
WHY ISN'T THIS DUMB KID SCARED....?


WHY...

TH-THERE'S A CUSTOMER. I'M GONNA GO TAKE CARE OF THAT, BRO.
'SCUSE US....!


YEEEEEK
HELLOOOO WELCOME TO OUR SHOP, GIRRRRRL!!


...I'LL GET IN AND BREAK LOKI OUT!
WHILE YOU'RE IN THERE DRAWING THEIR ATTENTION...
OH NO... WHY DO I HAVE TO COME IN HERE, I HATE SNAKES!!
TODAY IF YOU BUY, YOU CAN GET MEALWORMS AND FROZEN MICE FOR FREE!


I'M EXCITED! CUTE GIRLS LIKE YOU AREN'T USUALLY INTO REPTILES...
O-OH...?
I'LL TELL YOU WHAT-EVER YOU NEED TO KNOW, SO FEEL FREE TO BROWSE!

SHUF

ALL RIGHT. I'M DONE PLAYIN' AROUND!
THIS GUY'S POISON IS FATAL!
THERE CERTAINLY ARE MANY DIFFERENT SNAKES HERE.
THIS PLACE IS MUCH LIKE THE HVERGELMIR SPRING...
THAT CREATURE IS PROTECTED BY APPENDIX II OF CITES, IT'S A WONDER YOU HAVEN'T BEEN CAUGHT YET.
YOU'LL DIE OF SUFFOCATION AFTER YOU GET BITTEN BY THIS COBRA... IT HURTS A WHOLE LOT!!
I SUPPOSE THAT MAKES YOU, "BRO," THE EVIL DRAGON NIDHOGG.

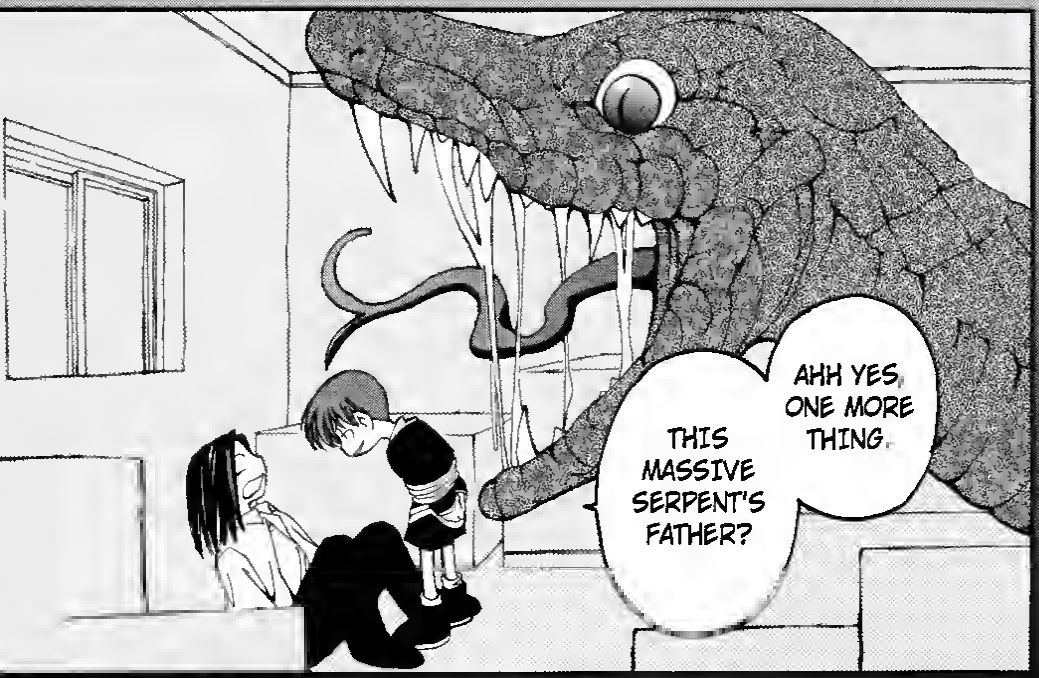
YOU SEE, I KNOW A MUCH MORE FEARSOME SNAKE
I'M NOT AFRAID OF ANY OF YOUR PALTRY SERPENTS...

IN THE NORSE EDDAS THERE IS A GREAT SNAKE JORMUNGAND, ALSO CALLED THE MIDGARD SERPENT. HE IS SO VAST THAT HE CAN ENCIRCLE THE ENTIRE EARTH.
!?

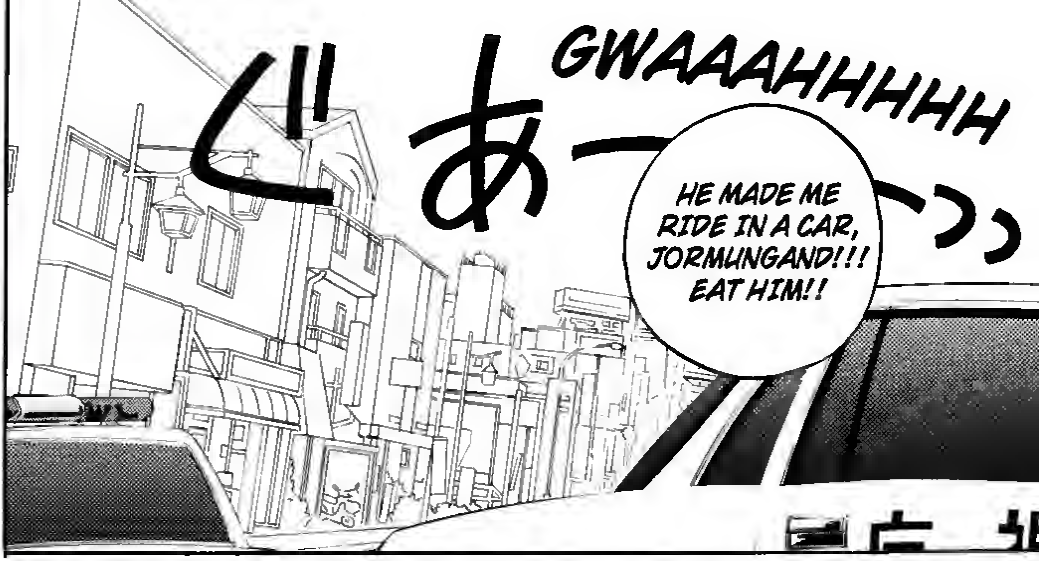
KNOCK
KNOCK
KNOCK
IS THIS THE PLACE!?
LOKI-SAMA!!!

OH, GOOD! HERE HE IS! I WILL ALLOW YOU TO SEE HIM! JORMUNGAND, THE MIDGARD SERPENT!
CLATTER
IT WON'T OPEN!!
NGH!!
CLATTER
YAMINO-KUN, I SHALL UNBIND YOUR MAGICAL POWER...
...SURELY, THEN IT WILL OPEN WITH EASE?
!
CRASH!!

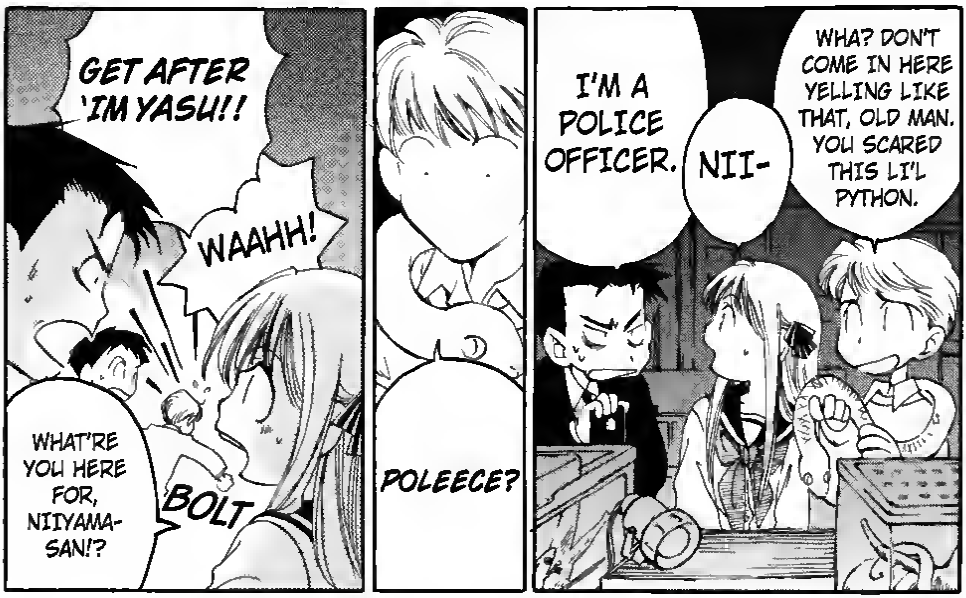
BOOM
AAAA
AAAA
AAUGH

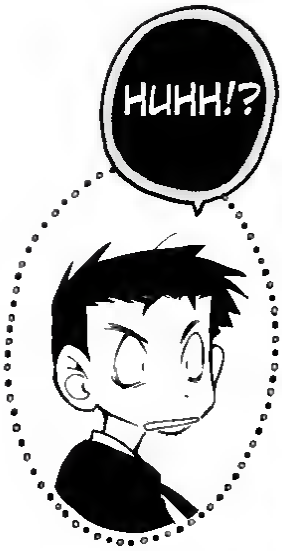


THE TRICKSTER GOD LOKI.


GWAAAHHHHH
HE MADE ME RIDE IN A CAR, JORMUNGAND!!! EAT HIM!!

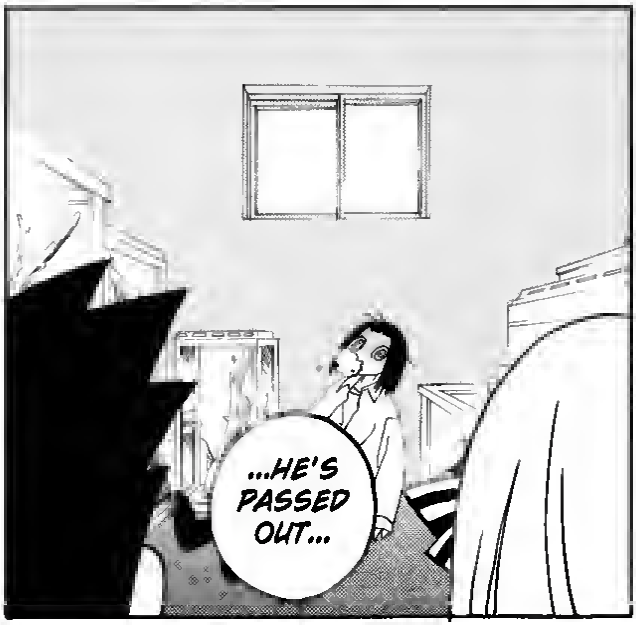
ARGH!
I KNEW YOU'D STICK YOUR NOSE IN IT!!
AUGH! DAIDOUJI'S KID!!


GET AFTER 'IM YASU!!
WAAHH!
WHAT'RE YOU HERE FOR, NIIYAMA-SAN!?
BOLT
POLEECE?
I'M A POLICE OFFICER.
NII-
WHA? DON'T COME IN HERE YELLING LIKE THAT, OLD MAN. YOU SCARED THIS LI'L PYTHON.

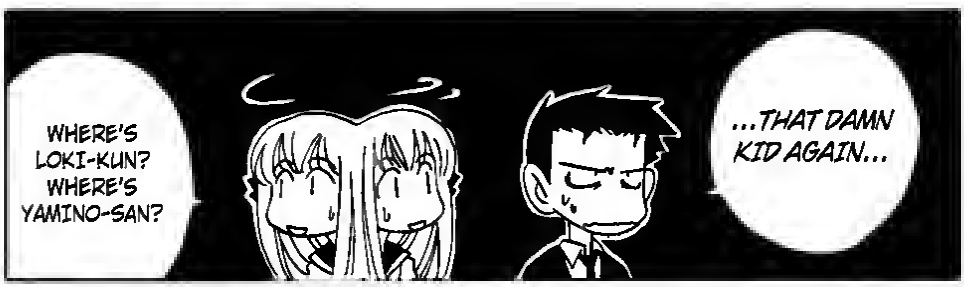

HUHH!?

THAT KID WAS LOKI-KUN...
A WITNESS MADE A STATEMENT SAYING THEY SPOTTED A KID BEING DRAGGED INTO A CAR.
IT WAS CLOSE TO THE SITE OF THE MUGGING, SO WE PUT TWO AND TWO TOGETHER. WE LOOKED UP THE LICENSE AND GOT HERE.

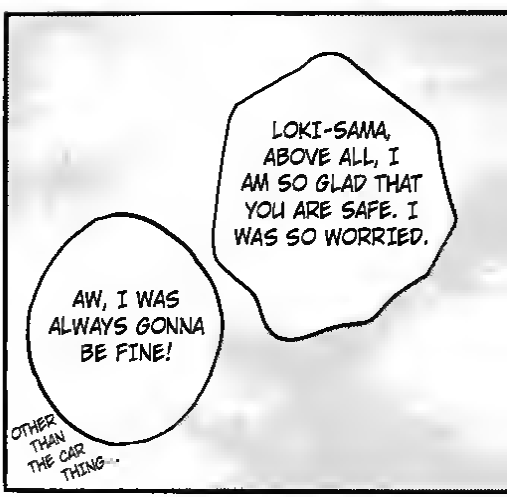
HE THOUGHT HE COULD GET THE MONEY AND MAKE A RUN FOR IT AT THIS POINT!? WHAT AN IDIOT!!
THE ROBBERY WAS A TWO-MAN JOB! WHERE'S THE ACCOMPLICE...!?
INSPECTOR, THEY ARE THE ROBBERS!!
AHH!! I'VE FOUND THE BILLION YEN!
MY MONEYYYY!


...HE'S PASSED OUT...

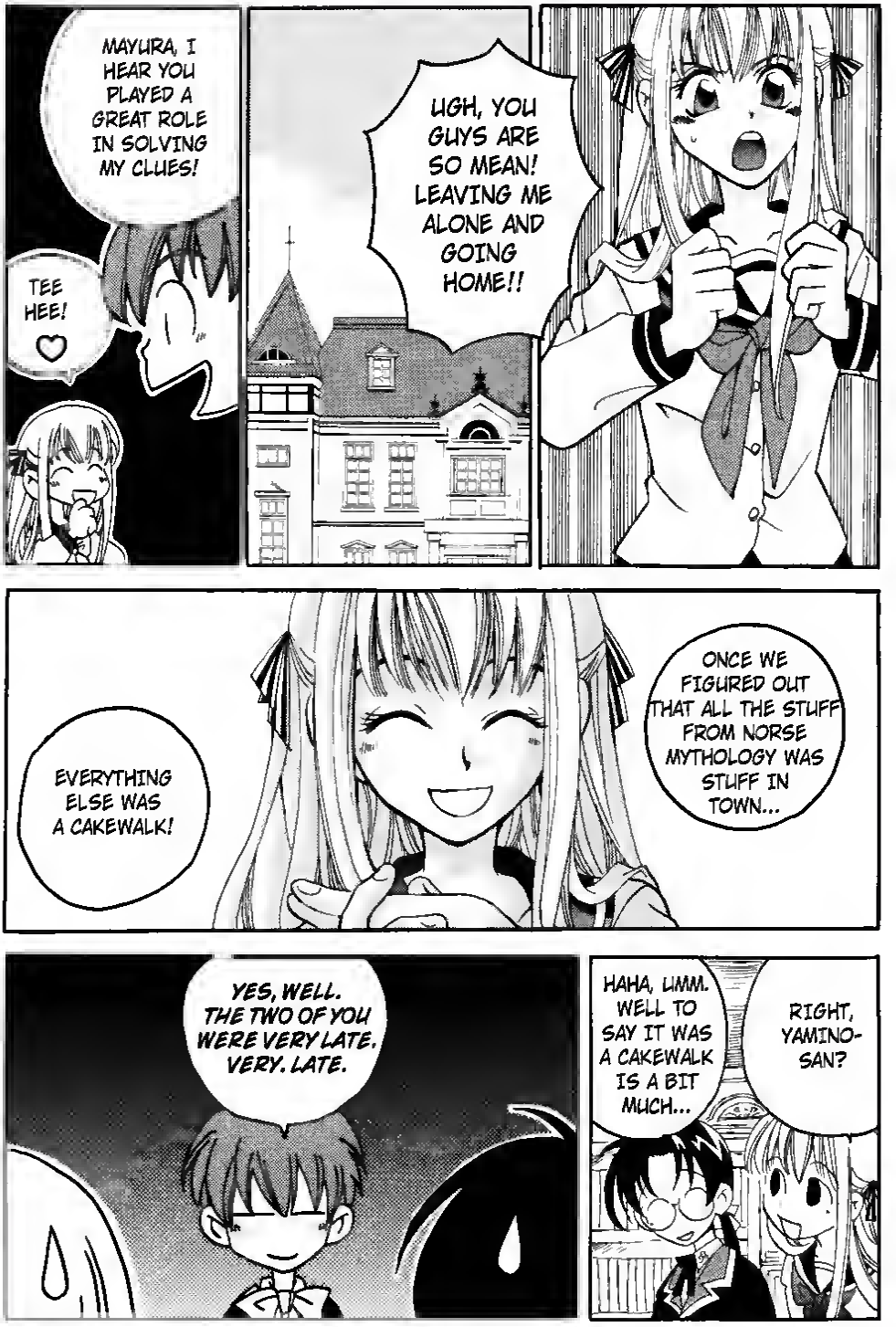
IN HERE!?
カリ
チャ
SLAM


WHERE'S LOKI-KUN? WHERE'S YAMINO-SAN?
...THAT DAMN KID AGAIN...

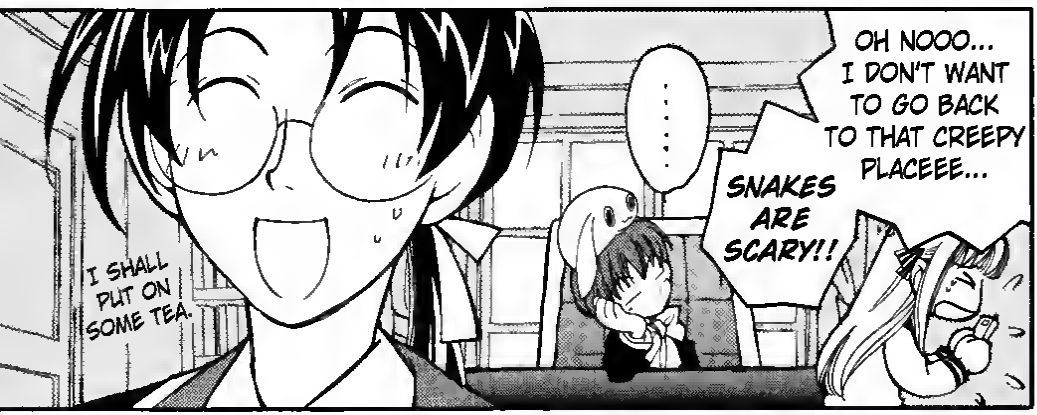
I THOUGHT IT'D BE A GREAT CHANCE TO TEST YOU GUYS AS MY ASSISTANTS!


LOKI-SAMA, ABOVE ALL, I AM SO GLAD THAT YOU ARE SAFE. I WAS SO WORRIED.
AW, I WAS ALWAYS GONNA BE FINE!
OTHER THAN THE CAR THING...

I WONDER... IS MY PRESENCE OF USE TO YOU, LOKI-SAMA...?
BEING ALONE IS NO GOOD, OF COURSE.
IF YOU WEREN'T HERE, I'D BE QUITE LONELY, YAMINO-KUN.
.....
I SEE.


MAYURA, I HEAR YOU PLAYED A GREAT ROLE IN SOLVING MY CLUES!
TEE HEE!
UGH, YOU GUYS ARE SO MEAN! LEAVING ME ALONE AND GOING HOME!!
ONCE WE FIGURED OUT THAT ALL THE STUFF FROM NORSE MYTHOLOGY WAS STUFF IN TOWN...
EVERYTHING ELSE WAS A CAKEWALK!
YES, WELL. THE TWO OF YOU WERE VERY LATE. VERY. LATE.
HAHA, UMM. WELL TO SAY IT WAS A CAKEWALK IS A BIT MUCH...
RIGHT, YAMINO-SAN?

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO GOT KIDNAPPED AND THEN MADE ALL THE CLUES... ISN'T THAT WORSE?
BRING
I'D HAVE SOLVED THEM MUCH MUCH FASTER! YOU TWO HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO...
RIGHT, ETCHAN♥
PUNYA.



NOW... I SHALL CAST A SPELL ON YOU...

MYSTICAL DETECTIVE LOKI 1: END

TO BE CONTINUED……
SEE YOU NEXT ISSUE!!